ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF TEMPLES

NUMBER 1

प्रत्नकीर्तिमपावृणु

CAVE-TEMPLES OF THE PALLAVAS

BY

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PREFACE TO THE SERIES

INDIAN TEMPLE-ARCHITECTURE HAS ENGAGED THE ATTENTION OF COMPETENT PERSONS FOR more than a century, from the days of the pioneering work of James Fergusson. Much valuable work has already been done, as a result of which the lines of evolution and regional characterizations have been established in broad outlines. But the finer lines have still to be drawn, and this can be done by a more extensive fieldwork and intensive examination of the data collected therefrom. It is for this dual purpose—survey and study of temple-architecture—that the Archaeological Survey of India set up, in 1955, an organization with two of its senior officers, one for the north and the other for the south, and the necessary staff. Both the officers have already covered much ground, though, due to the enormity of the work, much more remains to be covered. To the original scope of the project has now been added the study of iconography, for it would indeed have been an avoidable duplication of work were a separate organization for iconographic survey to be created.

It may be made clear that any attempt at co-ordination between the *śilpa-śāstras* and the monuments has been kept out of the purview of the project, for that would have entailed an unnecessary widening of its scope, besides being fraught with the risk of the introduction of subjective and uncertain elements into a factual survey and study. A great deal of vagueness prevails at present about the interpretations of many basic terms of the *śilpa-śāstras*. Thus, there is no concensus on the meanings of the terms *Nāgara*, *Vesara* and *Drāviḍa*—the three primary Orders of architecture according to the texts. While some persons have regarded the Orissan temples as the purest examples of the *Nāgara* Order, others have seen in them the illustration of the *Vesara*. Again, while the *Drāviḍa* Order, by its name, does seem to have a geographical connotation, such a connotation, as a corollary, has been extended to the other two, perhaps on inadequate grounds. The term *Vesara*, for instance, would lose all regional significance and assume a purely architectural aspect if it is, as seems very likely, a corrupt form of Sanskrit *dvy-aśra*, 'two-angled' (which is indeed implied in its definition by the *Māna-sāra* as *vṛittasy-āgre dvy-aśrakam*, 'having two angles in front of a round part,' and would very appropriately describe an apsidal structure).

Instances like this can be multiplied. It is clear that the pitfalls in the way of interpretations of the *śilpa-śāstras* are many and much laborious work is necessary to level the ground and put the interpretations on an unassailable basis. But to say this is not to mean that no help need be derived out of the texts even at this stage. Where the meanings of the textual terms are certain, as the names of many architectural components indeed are,

there is no reason why they should not be freely used in preference to the often inapt terms of European architecture.

The planning of the survey has necessarily been on a regional and chronological basis: it is only on this basis that the spatial and temporal developments of architectural elements can be brought out. This basis, it is admitted, may tend largely to coincide with a dynastic grouping—a tendency to avoid which precautions have to be taken, for art and architecture should reflect something less ephemeral than dynastic vagaries. At the same time, in cases where all or most of the monuments in a group are the direct outcome of the initiative and patronage of the rulers of a particular dynasty, a dynastic appellation of that group would doubtless be justified.

The first Number of the ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY OF TEMPLES SERIES embodies the results of the survey and study of the cave-temples executed by and under the auspices of the Pallavas. The future Numbers will be published as and when they are ready. Circumstances do not favour the publication of the Numbers in any definite order.

A. GHOSH
Director General of Archaeology in India

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CAVE-TEMPLES OF THE PALLAVAS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

OF THE NUMEROUS TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA, THE EARLIEST EXTANT GROUP BELONGS TO the Pallavas and the Chāḷukyas, while the subsequent groups fall into more or less unbroken lines, with Pallava or Chāḷukyan characteristics as their basis. The Gaṅgas, the Muttaraiyars, the earlier Chōḷas, the later Chōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas, the Vijayanagara rulers and the provincial Nāyakas continued the Pallava tradition in their respective zones, while the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the Telugu Chōḍas, the later Chāḷukyas, the Kākatīyas and the Hoysaḷas continued the early Chāḷukyan tradition in the rest of south India. Each of them would thus form a separate group with individual characters. While the contemporary Chāḷukyas, drawing largely from the experience of the rock-architecture that had prevailed for nearly a millennium, deliberately chose the softer rocks for their excavations and constructions, the Pallavas struck out a new mode of working on hard rocks, after a break of nearly a millennium from the time of Aśōka and his grandson Daśaratha, who had excavated into such hard rocks in the Barābar and Nāgārjunī hills. The nature of the material and the technique involved in its working obviously resulted in the special characters of Pallava rock-architecture, which have been noticed in detail in Chapter III of this work.

Since a chronological study of Pallava architecture would be incomplete without a knowledge of the dynastic history and the exact limits of the Pallava territory at different times, an outline of their political history has been given in Chapter II, in the light of the latest epigraphical researches.

The rock-architecture of the Pallavas would start with their cut-in temples, familiarly called the rock-cut cave-temples. These are essentially reproductions of *maṇḍapas*, which, as excavations, repeat the interior aspects of such pillared halls with one or more distal or lateral shrines with shrine-cells. While the disposition of these shrines is largely determined by the orientation of the main façade of the *maṇḍapa*, the frontages of the shrines reproduce in their architectural details the front elevations of the lower parts of a *vimāna* up to the *prastara*. There are also a few examples where the excavation represents a *vimāna* without the *maṇḍapa* in front. More than thirty excavations are concentrated in the Pallava territory of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, many of them authenticated by inscriptions of the respective excavator and therefore precisely datable. The dating of the rest in comparison with the dated ones would be the next step.

A simultaneous survey of the cave-temples in the peripheral area in the north, west and south of the Pallava territory would make the identification and isolation of cave-temples of a purely Pallava authorship possible. Thus, the cave-temples in Bhairavakoṇḍa (Nellore District), Vijayavāḍa (Kṛishṇā District) and Uṇḍavalli (Guṇṭūr District), all hitherto included under the Pallava group, would fall out of the group because of their

non-Pallava origin, style and epigraphical contents. The same conclusion would become obvious in the case of the cave-temples in Salem District on the west and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and other Districts on the south. A close study of the Pallava excavations, thus isolated, has revealed two groups of such Pallava cave-temples, viz. one of the type initiated by Mahēndra and another of the type modified by Māmalla who succeeded him. The general characters of these two groups and their relation with each other are described in Chapter IV. The cave-temple of the Mahēndra type is simpler with short, massive, square pillars on the façade with a heavy corbel or *pōtikā*. This was due to the inherent nature of the new rock-material of a yet-unknown mass and tensile strength. The intercolumniation also, therefore, was very short and equal. The cornice or *kapōta*, forming a part of the *prastara*, is undifferentiated except in a single instance. This type is distributed throughout the Pallava territory. The shrine-fronts inside have a moulded *adhishṭhāna* with pilasters often having capital-members of the ' order ' and a clear-cut *kapōta* with *kūḍu*-arches. The Māmalla type, confined to Mahābalipuram, includes a more ornate series. Pillars are slender and tend to become circular or polygonal, more elegant and proportionate and provided with capitals of the ' order '. The intercolumniation has also increased. The *kapōta* over the façade becomes distinct with *kūḍu*-arches and over the *prastara* is a string of miniature shrines. The pillars are usually lion- or *vyāla*-based. This type of cave-temples, which made its appearance in the time of Māmalla, persisted for two generations after him, while the Mahēndra type continued much later till the close of the Pallava period and set the norm which the contemporary dynasties, such as the Pāṇḍyas, Muttaraiyars, Adigaimāns, Chēras and Eastern Chāḷukyas, emulated with distinct variations or modifications in their respective areas outside the Pallava country.

Owing to the hardness and texture of the rock, the ornamental and sculptural decorations of the interiors and exteriors of these cave-temples could only be limited, thus presenting a contrast with the richness of ornamentation and lavishness of sculpture in the sandstone and other material of the cave-temples of contemporary and earlier dynasties. The sculptures are therefore bas-reliefs of large size, often fine group-compositions, judiciously distributed and not cut more or less in the round or cut out as in contemporary Chāḷukya and Rāshṭrakūṭa examples; whatever further embellishments the monuments needed were supplied by a thin coat of painted plaster or stucco over the smoothened stone surface. As between the Mahēndra and Māmalla cave-temples, the latter have more of sculpture and other decorative carvings. The most frequent and often the only sculpture is the *dvāra-pāla* or *dvāra-pālikā* as the case may be. The other sculptures, where present, are to be found on the walls of the *maṇḍapa* and in a few cases as small vignettes on the top squares of the pillars. The shrine-cells of the earlier Mahēndra type cave-temples and the earlier ones of the Māmalla series are now empty and contain neither a rock-cut *liṅga* (as is common in the Chāḷukya, Pāṇḍya, Muttaraiyar and Telugu-Chōḍa cave-temples) nor any rock-carving of an appropriate deity. But there are enough indications to show that the object of worship was a painting or stucco relief on the plastered hind wall, if not a carved and painted wooden plaque. It is only in the later examples of the Mahēndra and Māmalla types, and starting from about the time of Paramēśvara I that bas-reliefs of Sōmāskanda or forms of other deities, as the case may be, are found carved on the hind walls of the shrines. The absence of any original stone *liṅga* inside the Śaivite shrines is demonstrated by the absence of the *praṇāla* or water-spout or any other arrangement to take off the *abhishēka*-water. Another notable feature is the absence of Gaṇēśa, Jyēshṭhā and *sapta-mātṛikā* icons, usually associated with Pāṇḍya, Muttaraiyar and Chāḷukyan cave-temples outside Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam.

The Mahēndra type cave-temples fall into three periods, the first contemporary with Mahēndra, the second subsequent to Mahēndra and up to the time of Rājasiṁha

and the last after Rājasiṁha. Likewise, the Māmalla type cave-temples contemporaneous with those of Māmalla or with those of his successors till the time of Rājasiṁha form a separate group confined to Mahābalipuram. The cave-temples under these groups are described in detail in Chapter V.

Since a volume of *śilpa*-literature grew side by side with the growth of the temples and many contemporary inscriptions employ architectural terms, they have been appropriately used in the description of the architecture. The study has also made it possible to understand the derivation and functional aspects of many of the architectural motifs, particularly in the earlier series, which more or less get lost by transformation into mere decorative details and conventional patterns in the later examples.

CHAPTER II

THE PALLAVAS OF THE SIṀHAVISHṆU LINE

THE PERIOD COVERED BY THE LATTER HALF OF THE SIXTH TO THE FIRST HALF OF THE tenth century A.D. forms an important landmark in the political and cultural history of south India. It marks the rise to power and the decline of three great dynasties, viz. the Chāḷukyas with their capital at Bādāmi, the Pallavas at Kāñchī and the Pāṇḍyas at Madurai. The Chāḷukyas became divided during the first half of the eighth century into two independent groups, i.e. the Eastern Chāḷukyas of Vēṅgī and the Western Chāḷukyas of Kalyāṇī. The Bādāmi Chāḷukyas were, however, ably succeeded by the powerful Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānyakhēṭa in the north, while the Pallavas of the Siṁhavishṇu line and the Pāṇḍyas from the time of Kaḍuṅgōṉ continued to rule in their respective areas in the south.

Politically, this period of four centuries is a story of conflicts among the three powers for the extension of their influences and empires. It is mostly from the names of the contending parties occurring in inscriptions that the history of their kingdoms can be sketched. The Gaṅgas of Mysore, occupying the area to the west of the Pallava dominions and to the south of the Chāḷukyan territories, the Telugu-Chōḍas, who occupied the region to the north of the Pallava area and south-east of the Chāḷukyan area, the Muttaraiyars, who held a similar place between the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas in the south (fig. 1, p. 23), had a large share in the political conflicts of the period. Such conflicts, however, were no obstacle to the growth of art, religion and culture in these areas, influenced by a vast and many-sided religious revival that checked the growth of Jainism and Buddhism and resulted in a volume of soul-stirring devotional literature and advanced philosophical speculation. In fact, the contending parties seem to have vied with one another in their architectural and artistic creations and definite and crystallized styles of architecture and sculpture in their respective areas.[1]

SIṀHAVISHṆU (*circa* 550-80)

The founder of the Pallava dynasty of Kāñchī was Siṁhavishṇu or Avanisiṁha, son of Siṁhavarman,[2] who is known only from the records of his successors and the contemporary Gaṅga and Chāḷukya grants. He was the first Pallava sovereign, who extended his influence beyond Kāñchīpuram as far as Tiruchirāppaḷḷi in the south, as is evidenced by subsequent inscriptions.

The Hosakōṭe plates of the Gaṅga ruler Avanīta,[3] dated in his twelfth year, establish the contemporaneity of Siṁhavishṇu and Avanīta. Avanīta is known to have ruled during *circa* 555 to 605, and it may be taken that Siṁhavishṇu ruled from *circa* 550 to 580.

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[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India* (Madras, 1958), pp. 141-42.

[2] Regarding the position of Siṁhavarman see *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India* (Madras,), 1958-59, pp. 44-45.

[3] *Mysore Archaeological Reports*, 1938, p. 88.

Mahēndra, his son, has eulogized Siṁhavishṇu in his *Mattavilāsa-prahasana.*[1] Siṁhavishṇu is stated in the Kāśākkuḍi plates[2] to have vanquished the Kaḷabhras, Maḷavas, Chōḷas, Pāṇḍyas and Siṁhaḷas in the course of his extension of the Pallava territory as far as the Kāvērī river. The possibility of the southern boundary of the Pallava kingdom reaching as far as the Kāvērī is supported by a late ninth century record, which names Kañjaṉūr in Kumbakōṇam Taluk as Siṁhavishṇu-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam.[3] His devotion to Vishṇu is testified to by the Udayēndiram plates of Nandivarman.[4] It is interesting to note that Siṁhavishṇu's mother (*jananī*) consecrated a Jaina temple, to which a grant was given by the Gaṅga king Avanīta,[5] though her relation with Avanīta is not given in the grant.

MAHĒNDRAVARMAN I (*circa* 580-630)

Mahēndravarman I, who succeeded Siṁhavishṇu, inherited the vast kingdom extending south up to the Kāvērī. He must have had a fairly long reign of fifty years to account for all his achievements in the novel method of excavating rock-cut shrines. From his reign onwards, stone inscriptions begin to appear. Although Mahēndravarman and his successors did not date their records according to any era, their chronology can be fixed with the help of the information regarding their relation with Chāḷukyan kings of known dates. He was the originator of rock-architecture in south India, as his Maṇḍagappaṭṭu inscription,[6] in Sanskrit verse, testifies. All his known inscriptions either consist of labels denoting his various titles like Saṅkīrṇajāti, Mattavilāsa, Guṇabhara, Lalitāṅkura, Śatrumalla, Chēttakāri, etc., which reveal the king's many-sided character, or record the excavation of cave-temples named after one or other of his *birudas*. The other titles—Pasarambu, Bujjanakanṭhu, Pisugu, Vēntulavittu and Nilvulēnēyambu —that he assumed, were obviously due to his connexion with the Telugu country, while those like Kūṟṟambu, Chitrakārapuli, Vañcha-vaḷava (*vaḷava*=Chōḷa), etc., denote his adoption of Tamil titles as well.

Mahēndra initiated the Pallava-Chāḷukya and Pallava-Pāṇḍya feuds, which were continued by his successors for one and half centuries, though the real reasons for these prolonged conflicts are yet to be determined. The Aihoḷe inscription of Pulakēśin II[7] refers to the defeat of the lord of the Pallavas, whom Pulakēśin forced to take shelter at Kāñchī, though only the northernmost portions of the Pallava territories seem to have been lost in this encounter. It is known from the Kāśākkuḍi plates[8] that Mahēndra won a victory at Puḷḷalūr in Kāñchīpuram Taluk, most probably over the Chāḷukyas, although the record does not mention the name of the enemy of the Pallavas. Mahēndra's cave-inscription at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi[9] shows that his kingdom extended in the south up to the river Kāvērī, even late in his reign.

Mahēndra's rule was eventful in the realm of religious and literary activities. He was himself the author of the burlesque *Mattavilāsa-prahasana*, the opening portion of which

[1] *Mattavilāsa-prahasana*, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, no. LV (Trivandrum, 1917), p. 3.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 73, v. 20. 'Maḷava' is Sanskritized as 'Māḷava' in the plates.
[3] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1907, no. 265.
[4] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 74, ll. 11–12.
[5] *Mysore Archaeological Reports*, 1938, p. 90.
[6] *Epigraphia Indica*, XVII, p. 17.
[7] *Ibid.*, VI, p. 11.
[8] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 73, v. 21.
[9] *Ibid.*, I, nos. 33 and 34.

eulogizes the virtues of the king. The work gives interesting information pertaining to the vices of the Śākya-bhikshus and the views of the Kāpālikas about Buddha's teachings. Along with Jainism, Buddhism flourished at Kāñchī in his time; this is supported by the statement of Hiuen Tsang about the existence of *vihāras* around Kāñchī. The two Śaiva saints, Appar and Sambandar, supposed to have been contemporaries of Mahēndra appear to be of a slightly later date.

NARASIṀHAVARMAN I MĀMALLA (*circa* 630-68)

Narasiṁhavarman I, the most memorable sovereign of the line, succeeded Mahēndra in about 630. He was engrossed in wars with the Chāḷukyas, leading to the capture of the Chāḷukyan capital Vātāpi and sent a naval expedition to Ceylon. He was able to defeat Pulakēśin at three places, with the help, as it is generally supposed of his general Śiruttoṇḍa, who, according to tradition, is the canonized Śaiva saint Śiruttoṇḍar eulogized by the hymnist Sambandar. From the Kūram plates of Paramēśvaravarman,[1] it is known that Narasiṁha won a memorable victory over Pulakēśin II in the battles of Pariyaḷa, Maṇimaṅgala and Suramāra. The rock-inscription behind the Mallikārjuna temple at Bādāmi,[2] dated in his thirteenth year, helps us to date the event in or about 642 (more precisely between 639 and 643). The Pallavas seem to have held sway in the southern part of the Chāḷukyan dominions, during the confusion for thirteen years following Pulakēśin's death. The Ceylonese invasion was necessitated by the reinstatement of the Ceylonese prince Mānavamma, who, as a refugee in the Pallava court, had earlier helped Narasiṁha in his war with the Chāḷukyas.[3] With the evidence of the Gadvāl grant[4] of Vikramāditya and the date of accession of Mānavamma, which cannot be pushed back to earlier than 668,[5] the reign-period of Narasiṁhavarman may be placed in *circa* 630-68.

Narasiṁhavarman is stated to have defeated the Chōḷas, Chēras, Kaḷabhras and the Pāṇḍyas, but no details of these wars are known. No inscription of his has been found south of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited Kāñchī in about 640 and his accounts of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, particularly of Kāñchī,[6] are valuable. Narasiṁhavarman Māmalla made great contributions to the rock-architecture and sculpture of south India initiated by his predecessor. The variety of rock-cut monuments at Mahābalipuram attests to the greatness of his reign.

MAHĒNDRAVARMAN II (*circa* 668-72)

In about 668, Māmalla was succeeded by his son Mahēndravarman II, who, in his short reign of about five years continued not only the artistic traditions of his predecessors but also the hostile policy with the Chāḷukyas, thus coming into clash with Vikramāditya I. There is probably a reference to the struggle between Mahēndravarman II

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 151.
[2] *Ibid.*, XI, pt. i, no. 1; *Indian Antiquary*, IX, p. 199.
[3] For details of the invasion, see G. Geiger, *Mahāvaṁsa*, chapter 47 and Kāśākkuḍi plates in *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 73.
[4] *Epigraphia Indica*, X, p. 101.
[5] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1913, p. 528.
[6] S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II (London, 1910), pp. 228 ff.

and Śilāditya, son of Jayasiṁha and nephew of Vikramāditya in the Gaddemanē inscription.[1] A portrait of this king with his queens and another of Narasiṁhavarman I with his queens are found in the Ādi-Varāha temple at Mahābalipuram.

PARAMĒŚVARAVARMAN I (*circa* 672-700)

Paramēśvaravarman I, son of Mahēndravarman II, began his rule in *circa* 672. A few inscriptions of this king have come down to us. They are—the Kūram plates,[2] the Vunna Guruvayapālem (Podili) plates[3] and stone inscriptions from Mahābalipuram and Śiṟṟambākkam.[4] The inscription at Śiṟṟambākkam is inscribed on a slab used as a step to the entrance to the Śelliyammaṉ temple. It is dated in the first year of the king's reign and records the construction of a temple by Sōmāśiyār and others. The Podili plates, dated in his nineteenth year, Pausha, *su.* 13, Sunday, record the gift of the village Kandukūru, made free of all taxes, to a Brahmin, Dēvaśarman, on the occasion of an *uttarāyaṇa-saṁkrānti* for the longevity of the king.

Paramēśvaravarman continued the strained relations with the Chāḷukyas. It is known that Chāḷukya Vikramāditya I (655-81) had to encounter, before 674, no less than three Pallava kings, viz. Narasiṁha I, Mahēndra II and Paramēśvara I, to recover his lost territories. According to the Honnūr grant, Vikramāditya encamped at Malliyūr-grāma lying to the west of Kāñchīpuram.[5] The Gadvāl plates and other Chāḷukyan grants reveal that Vikramāditya conquered Kāñchī, destroyed Māmalla's family and camped near Uragapura on the Kāvērī on the 25th April, 674. The Kūram plates of Paramēśvara[6] and the Udayēndiram plates[7] make us understand that Paramēśvara defeated the army of the Vallabha (i.e. Vikramāditya) in the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr (Tiruchirāppaḷḷi District) in the heart of the Chōḷa country and put to flight the Chāḷukyan king, in spite of the fact that the latter had a very powerful army. A picturesque description of this battle is given in the Kūram plates, from which we also learn the names of Paramēśvara's elephant and horse, Arivāraṇa and Atiśaya. This battle must have taken place after 674. Another event was the Pallava-Gaṅga feud which seems to be indicated by the battle of Viḷandai, wherein Bhūvikrama, the Gaṅga king, claims to have defeated the Pallava king, who was probably Paramēśvaravarman.[8]

Paramēśvara was a staunch Śaiva. The paucity of a large number of edifices in his reign may be accounted for by his being engrossed in wars. In spite of this, he carved the Gaṇēśa-ratha and excavated the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam and Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam, besides completing the Draupadī and other *rathas* and the Ādi-Varāha cave-temple at Mahābalipuram. The Śiva temple built in his time at Kūram, called Vidyāvinīta-Pallava-Paramēśvara-gṛiham, after his name, and the one mentioned in the Śiṟṟambākkam inscription, may represent the early attempts in the construction of stone structural temples.

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[1] *Mysore Archaeological Reports*, 1923, no. 72.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 151.

[3] *The Hindu* (Madras), June 16, 1957; *Epigraphia Indica*, XXXII, no. 9, pp. 91-98.

[4] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, nos. 19-23 (Mahābalipuram); *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, 1947-48, no. 83; *Epigraphia Indica*, XXXII, no. 23, pp. 289-90 (Śiṟṟambākkam).

[5] *Mysore Archaeological Reports*, 1939, p. 134.

[6] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 151.

[7] *Ibid.*, II, no. 74, ll. 16-17.

[8] *Indian Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII, pp. 63 ff.

NARASIṀHAVARMAN II RĀJASIṀHA (*circa* 700-28)

Narasiṁhavarman II Rājasiṁha succeeded to the throne after Paramēśvaravarman in 700, as is evidenced by the Rēyūru grant dated in his twelfth year.[1] His reign period can be ascertained with the help of Chinese sources,[2] which show that he was ruling at least till 720. In fact, his reign seems to have extended up to 728. As he was comparatively free from dynastic wars, notable progress was made in the field of temple-building, the most outstanding stone monuments erected by him being the Kailāsanātha and Airāvatēśvara temples at Kāñchī,[3] the Shore Temple at Mahābalipuram and the Tālapurīśvara temple at Panamalai.[4] He is also credited with the construction of a Buddhist *vihāra* at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam.[5] He continued the tradition of excavating cave-temples and has left two caves at Śāḷuvaṇkuppam, near Mahābalipuram. His queen Raṅgapatākā raised a small shrine in the Kāilāsanātha temple at Kāñchī. His Kāñchī, Tiruppōrūr and Panamalai inscriptions[6] give his titles, such as Atiraṇachaṇḍa, Samaradhanañjaya, Atyantakāma, Jñānasāgara, etc.

It is generally assumed that Daṇḍin and Bhāsa were his contemporaries. This is based on the very meagre evidences of the poets' works.

MAHĒNDRAVARMAN III (*circa* 720-28)

After Narasiṁhavarman II, we have the name of Mahēndravarman III in the Pallava genealogy, who added to the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram and left his inscriptions there.[7] A label-inscription of his, reading *śri-Mahēndravarmēśvara-gṛiham*, is also found on a slab fixed in the northern end of the Okka-piṟandāṉ-kuḷam street of that city.[8] He ruled, perhaps jointly as *yuvarāja* with his father, for a period of about eight years, 720-28, but seems to have predeceased his father: it is probably he who is represented as the wounded person being brought in a litter from the battle-field to the presence of Rājasiṁha and his queen in panel XVIII of the sculptures in the Vaikuṇṭha-perumāḷ temple at Kāñchīpuram.[9]

The Gaṅga king Śrīpurusha (725-88) claims to have won the Pallava umbrella and the title *Permānaḍi* after killing the king of Kāñchī (i.e. *Kāḍuveṭṭi*).[10] It is probable that Mahēndravarman III was the *Kāḍuveṭṭi* who was killed.

PARAMĒŚVARAVARMAN II (*circa* 728-31)

Kings Narasiṁhavarman II and Mahēndravarman III were followed by Paramēśvaravarman II, whose exact relationship with the former is not clear. He might have been a

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, XXIX, p. 92.

[2] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India* (Madras, 1939), pp. 116-17.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, p. 14; XII, p. iii.

[4] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 29.

[5] *Indian Antiquary*, XXII, p. 45. This is obviously the same as the one constructed for the Chinese.

[6] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, nos. 24, 25 and 26; XII, nos. 27, 29 and 30.

[7] *Ibid.*, I, no. 27. The Kailāsanātha inscription describes him as the son of the king Rājasiṁha and the grandson of Lōkāditya (Paramēśvara I) and records the fact of his having built the shrine of Mahēndravarmēśvara.

[8] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 31.

[9] C. Minakshi, *The Historical Sculptures of the Vaikuṇṭha-perumāḷ Temple*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 63 (Delhi, 1941), p. 62 and pl. XII, 6.

[10] *Epigraphia Carnatica*, VIII, Nagar, 35.

younger brother of Rājasiṁha or a member of a collateral family, who took over the kingdom since the crown prince Mahēndravarman III was dead. The date of his accession can be fixed as 728, with the help of the recently-discovered Uḷchala inscription of Vijayāditya, dated in his thirtyfifth year.[1] His reign lasted only for about three years, and in 731 Chāḷukya Vikramāditya, as *yuvarāja*, invaded Kāñchī and levied tribute. The invasion was perhaps the cause of confusion and anarchy, followed by the death of Paramēśvaravarman. The Vīraṭṭānēśvara temple inscription at Tiruvadi, dated in his third year[2], records a gift of gold. The Kāśākkuḍi plates[3] merely speak of him as a conqueror of Kali and as a protector of the world. The Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates[4] also contain an equally meagre description of him.

NANDIVARMAN II PALLAVAMALLA (*circa* 732-96)

Paramēśvaravarman's death was followed by confusion and anarchy, which necessitated the election of his successor. The labelled sculptures in the Vaikuṇṭha-perumāḷ temple narrate that a deputation of *mātrās*, *mūla-purushas* and others waited on Hiraṇyavarman (a member of a collateral line), who enquired of the assembled chiefs as well as of his sons whether they would accept kingship. All of them except Nandivarman, a twelve-year old son of Hiraṇyavarman, refused. To assume kingship Nandivarman had to go a long way by crossing many mountains, rivers, etc., in order to reach Kāñchī. A careful examination of the contents of the inscriptions below the sculptures in the Vaikuṇṭha-perumāḷ temple would suggest that the accession of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla to the throne was not as peaceful as is generally supposed. He had to encounter some opposition from Pallavadiyaraiyar, who came with a mighty force consisting of men and elephants.[5] It is difficult to establish the identity of this Pallavadiyaraiyar. He was probably one of the two grandsons of Rājasiṁha and the two sons of *yuvarāja* Mahēndravarman III.[6] Further, he had to contend against Chitramāya, whose cause was espoused by the Pāṇḍya king Māṟavarman Rājasiṁha I (730-65). Hence the circumstances under which Pallavamalla began to rule in *circa* 731, allowing a couple of years for the anarchy, were by no means peaceful.

Nandivarman II Pallavamalla had a very long reign of sixtyfive years, as is evidenced by one of his many inscriptions,[7] but it does not appear to have been uninterrupted. He revived the practice of quoting regnal years in inscriptions, which aids considerably in the study of later Pallava chronology. His kingdom extended to the southern limits of the Chōḷa-maṇḍalam. He had the titles Nayadhīra, Kshatriyamalla, Śrīdhara and Ēkadhīra. His many-sided activities can be gleaned in sufficient detail by a study of his own inscriptions alongside the contemporary inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyas, the Chāḷukyas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

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[1] *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Thirteenth Session* (Nagpur, 1950), pp. 96 ff.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1903, no. 52; *South Indian Inscriptions*, VIII, no. 331.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 73, v. 26.

[4] *Ibid.*, no. 98, v. 14.

[5] Minakshi, *op. cit.*, p. 33, Appendix, I, pp. 54-55; also *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 135. The relevant passages read: (line 1) *Aṅgu-ninṟum pōndu pala giri-nadi-vaṇa-gahana(ṁ)-gaḷaik-kaḷindu varuginṟamai kēṭṭu Pallavadiaraiyar edirēy* (line 2) *mahābalattōḍuṁvandu ya(va)ṇai eṟṟikkoṇḍu Kanchīpura-mahānagarattu .... gi marindu ponda iḍam.*

[6] See Hellegere plate, *Epigraphia Carnatica*, III, Md. 113, dated Śaka 635, which mentions two sons of a Pallava *yuvarāja*, viz. Jaya Pallavādhirāja and Vṛiddhi Pallavādhirāja, who figure as the donors.

[7] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 38.

Soon after his coronation, Nandivarman had to face the invasion of Kāñchī by Vikramāditya II before the latter's eighth year or 741-42.[1] Though Nandivarman was defeated and fled from Kāñchī, Vikramāditya magnanimously spared the capital from destruction and won the hearts of the people of Kāñchī by his liberal gifts of gold to the Kailāsanātha temple. After satisfying himself that he had removed the outstanding stain on the Chāḷukyas (i.e. Narasiṁha's capture of Vātāpi), he left for his own territories.

Nandivarman had also to face a number of defeats from Rājasiṁha, the Pāṇḍya king, at Neḍuvayal, Kuṟumaḍai, Maṇṇikkuṟichchi, Tirumaṅgai, Pūvāḷūr, Koḍumbāḷūr, Periyalūr etc. according to the inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyas.[2] Nandivarman was besieged at Nandigrāma, but his general Udayachandra was able to force a defeat on the Pāṇḍyan forces after beheading Chitramāya.[3] Nandigrāma may perhaps be identified with the village Nandivaram in Chingleput District.[4] Udayachandra seems to have also put down the rebellions of the Śabara king Udayana and Pṛithvī-vyāghra.

Shortly after this, Dantidurga (725-58), the founder of the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty, occupied Kāñchī[5] but later seems to have lived in amity with Nandivarman, as he gave his daughter Rēvā in marriage to the Pallava monarch.[6]

The Taṇḍantōṭṭam plates state that Nandivarman seized the neck-ornament with the gem Ugrōdaya from the Gaṅga king.[7] A hero-stone inscription from Kuḷidikki[8] in Guḍiyāttam Taluk of North Arcot District throws some light on the relationship between the Gaṅgas, the Bāṇa chiefs and Pallavamalla. It is dated in the fiftysecond year of the king's reign and records the death of a Gaṅgadiyaraiyar, the chief of Kaṟkāṭṭūr. The details relating to this event and to the erection of the hero-stone are stated in the inscription briefly as follows. Gaṅgadiyaraiyar, at the instance of his uncle (*māmaḍi*) Vāṇaraiyar, fought against the Vallavaraiyaṉ (Rāshṭrakūṭa) when the latter invaded the country of the Perumāṇaḍigaḷ (Nandivarman) and died on the occasion. Knowing this, Peruṅgaṅgar (Gaṅga chief) erected the hero-stone (*kaṉṉāḍu*) in memory of Gaṅgadiyaraiyar. The inscription is interesting in that it gives the first direct and pointed reference to the Rāshṭrakūṭa attack on the Pallavas.

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, III, pp. 359 ff.; V, pp. 200 ff.; IX, p. 206. From one of the Paṭṭaḍkal inscriptions (*Indian Antiquary*, X, p. 164) we learn that Vikramāditya conquered Kāñchī thrice. The Nārwan plates (*Epigraphia Indica*, XXVII, pp. 126 ff.) dated Śaka 664 (A.D. 741-42), help us to know that this was the second invasion led by Vikramāditya. The third invasion, however, took place towards the end of Vikramāditya's reign (746-47) and was led by prince Kīrttivarman.

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, XVII, pp. 291 ff.; *South Indian Inscriptions*, III, pp. 441 ff.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 74, l. 48.

[4] *Journal of Oriental Research*, XIX, p. 192. R. Satyanathaier, however, identifies this place with Nandipuram near Kumbakōṇam, *The History and Culture of the Indian People, Classical Age* (Bombay, 1954), p. 263.

[5] *Epigraphia Indica*, IX, p. 24.

[6] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 98, v. 16.

[7] *Ibid.*, no. 99, v. 6.

[8] *Epigraphia Indica*, XXII, pp. 110 ff., where Veṇkuḷikkōṭṭai is wrongly read as Peṇkuḷikkōṭṭai, and Vallavaraiyar (Rāshṭrakūṭa) as Pallavaraiyar (Pallava), and *kaṉṉāḍu*, which means 'erection of hero-stone', is taken to be a part of the chief's name. The inscription has been re-edited and its contents discussed in *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India*, 1958-59, pp. 15-24. The Bāṇas, who had the policy of shifting alliances, were also subdued by the Pallavas, since a Mahāvali Vāṇarāya is known to be a subordinate of Nandivarman in his sixtysecond year (*South Indian Inscriptions*, III, p. 91); subsequently there is a Bāṇa chief ruling over Gaṅgavāḍi-6000 with Pallava support (*Epigraphia Carnatica*, X, p. iv). This Kuḷidikki inscription is of great value in determining the relationship between the Gaṅgas and the Pallavas at that time. It is clear from this that the Gaṅgas were subordinates of Pallavamalla.

Nandivarman, whose pre-coronation names were Paramēśvara and Pallavamalla, was a devotee of Vishṇu; the noted Vaishṇava saint, Tirumaṅgai-āḷvār, is believed to have lived during his time. In spite of all these wars, he constructed the Vaikuṇṭha-pērumāḷ temple[1] (*Paramēśvara-viṇṇagaram*) and the Muktēśvara temple, both at Kāñchī.[2] The Udayēndiram plates claim that Nandivarman performed an *aśvamēdha.*[3] Another achievement of Nandivarman is the depiction, in narrative sculptures, of the history of the Pallavas in the Vaikuṇṭha-pērumāḷ temple from their putative ancestry down to the later years of his reign—a unique record which helps to clarify many points in Pallava history.

DANTIVARMAN (*circa* 796-846)

After the death of Nandivarman, his son Dantivarman, through the Rāshṭrakūṭa princess Rēvā, must have succeeded to the throne some time before 804 as evidences go to show, but the actual date was probably 795, the last regnal year of his predecessor. He ruled for at least fiftyone years, as is revealed by his latest inscription from Tiruch-chāṇūr in Chandragiri Taluk of Chittoor District.[4] He had to face the hostility of the Rāshṭrakūṭas under Gōvinda III, who, crowned in 794 by Dhruva, entered the Pallava country in the wake of his northern campaigns and captured Kāñchī, after defeating Dantivarman. Later, in 804-05, he retired to his camp at Rāmēśvara-tīrtha on the bank of the Tuṅgabhadrā.[5]

An inscription on a pillar set up at Hulibīḍu, in Ālur Taluk of Bellary District, dated in the fourth year, records the death of a hero Śirigoppa, when he opposed the army of Danti, which had attacked the village of Chikuraṁbāvi.[6] It is tempting to identify this Danti with Dantivarman, who might have invaded the village, which was under the Raṭṭas, the subordinates of the Rāshṭrakūṭas. This would perhaps explain the necessity of Gōvinda's temporary occupation of Kāñchī.

Dantivarman's queen was Aggaḷanimmaḍi, a Kadamba princess.[7] Among his subordinates were a Chōḷa chief named Ulagaperumāṇār and a Kāḍuveṭṭi Muttaraiyaṉ. He seems to have built the Kailāsanātha temple at Ālaṁbākkam, after naming the village Dantivarma-maṅgalam. In his sixteenth year, Kuvāvaṉ-Śāttaṉ, a Muttaraiya chieftain excavated a cave-temple at Malayaḍippaṭṭi,[8] which would indicate the extent of his territory in Chōḷa-maṇḍalam.

NANDIVARMAN III (*circa* 846-59)

Dantivarman was followed by his son Nandivarman III in *circa* 846. The records of Nandivarman II and III are not easily distinguishable from one another, and, as such,

[1] Longhurst is of the view that this temple was built by Paramēśvaravarman II. The duration of Paramēśvaravarman's rule, as is well-known, was too short for this gigantic achievement. The hymns of Tirumaṅgai-āḷvār and the inscription of Dantivarman seem, however, to point to the reign of Nandivarman Pallavamalla as the period of the construction.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 827. The ancient name of this temple was Dharma-mahādēvī-griham, possibly so called after the name of his queen Dharma-mahādēvī.

[3] *Ibid.*, II, no. 74.

[4] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 43.

[5] *Indian Antiquary*, XI, p. 126.

[6] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1915, no. 562.

[7] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, p. v.

[8] *Inscriptions of the Pudukkōṭṭai State* (Texts), no. 18.

the duration of the latter's reign cannot be ascertained precisely. Nandivarman III has been usually identified with the victor at Teḷḷāṟu. But the fact that the victor at Teḷḷāṟu could be a different person altogether and a later king is proved by the silence of the Bāhūr plates[1] of Nṛipatuṅga, dated in his eighth year, over the victory of Teḷḷāṟu, which was no doubt an important event worth recording. Further, the Śeṉṉivāykkāl hero-stone inscription[2] dated in the twentyfirst year of Teḷḷāṟṟeṉinda Nandi, in characters of the tenth century, mentions the temple of Ariñjigai-Īśvaram built at Parāntakapuram, pointing to the facts that they were named after Ariñjaya and Parāntaka Chōḷa and that the Nandivarman of the inscription must have lived only during the time of the early Chōḷas, i.e. in the tenth century. This is supported by another inscription at Tiruvaigāvūr, dated in the twentysecond year of Nandivarmarāja[3] in characters of the tenth-eleventh centuries. The mention of Tribhuvana-mahādēvi-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam clearly indicates that the village was named after the Chōḷa queen Tribhuvana-mahādēvī. These inscriptions cannot be later copies of previous records as is stated in explanation by the editor of the Śeṉṉivāykkāl inscription, since in the process of re-copying changes are never made in the names of temples, places and territorial divisions, not even while reconstructing earlier temples in stone; furthermore, there is no known case where a hero- or memorial-stone has been re-copied.

Nandivarman III had a queen Śaṅkhā, a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess, daughter of Amōghavarsha. Māṟambāvai, who figures as a donor in two inscriptions at Tiruchcheṉṉampūṇḍi and in one dated and one undated inscription of an early Chōḷa (Rājakēsari),[4] identified as Āditya I, was perhaps another queen of Nandivarman III. His Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates, dated in the sixth year,[5] record the gift of the village Śrīkāṭṭuppaḷḷi to the Śiva temple, built by Yajñabhaṭṭa, at the instance of Chōḷa Mahārāja Kumārāṅkuśa, probably identical with Balliya Chōḷa of Karikāla's line, who, it is known, had the title of Kumārāṅkuśa.[6]

The Vishṇu temple at Kiḷiyaṉūr, in South Arcot District, and the *mukha-maṇḍapa* of the Śiva temple at Paḷḷikoṇḍa, in North Arcot District, are perhaps the only monuments known from inscriptions to have been erected during his short reign.

Since the records of Nandivarman II and III are not distinguishable from one another, it is possible that many of the records attributed hitherto to Nandivarman III may really belong to the former. It is known that the latter's predecessors Nandivarman II and Dantivarman and his successor Nṛipatuṅga had fairly long reigns of sixtyfive, fiftytwo and fortyone years respectively and in the absence of any other evidence relating to the actual extent of his reign, it may reasonably be inferred that

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[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, XVIII, pp. 5 ff.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 56. No instance of a hero-stone being re-engraved later has come down to us so far. See also *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, III, pt. i, Introduction, pp. xlviii ff.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 58.

[4] *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, no. 523; *ibid.*, III, no. 94; also *ibid.*, VI, no. 449 (eighteenth year of Āditya I). The two Tiruchcheṉṉampūṇḍi inscriptions (*ibid.*, VII, nos. 523, 525) mention only Māṟambāvāi and her gifts and are not dated in the reign of any king, while in *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, July 1901, p. 6, para. 10, it is wrongly stated that the inscriptions are dated in the years of Nṛipatuṅga. There is, however, an adjoining Nṛipatuṅga inscription (no. 522) on the same pillar, which, along with one of the two inscriptions, has been copied as a single number, though the texts have been correctly published separately. The two Niyamam inscriptions specifically mention the Chōḷa Rājakēsari (Āditya) (*South Indian Inscriptions*, III, no. 94 and VI, no. 449). While the date-portion is damaged in one, it is the eighteenth year in the case of the other. See also p. 17 below.

[5] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 98.

[6] *Journal of Indian History*, XV, p. 258.

it was short, about fourteen years (i.e., *circa* 845-59). His Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates[1] and his Tiruveḷḷarai (Tiruchirāppaḷḷi District) verse inscription, mentioning him as Nandi, son of Danti,[2] are his two clearly identifiable inscriptions; both are dated in his sixth year.

NṚIPATUṄGAVARMAN (*circa* 859-99)

Nṛipatuṅga, son of Nandivarman III, by his Rāshṭrakūṭa queen Śaṅkhā, ruled for at least fortyone years as is evidenced by his recently discovered Maḍavalam inscription.[3] Formerly the last known inscription of Nṛipatuṅga was that of his twentysixth year. The discovery of this inscription giving him a longer reign necessitates the revision of earlier ideas of later Pallava chronology with reference to contemporary Pallava, Pāṇḍya, Chōḷa, Gaṅga and other records. In the preface to *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, the editor has noted that one of the records of Nṛipatuṅga (no. 528) from Tiruchennampūṇḍi furnishes some astronomical details, viz. twentysecond year, Dhanus, Jyēshṭhā, Friday, the equivalent of which works out as 28th November, A.D. 867, yielding A.D. 845 as the date of Nṛipatuṅga's accession. This would be rather too early, considering the regnal dates of his predecessor as worked out above (845-59). The details also work out correctly to Friday, 22nd December, A.D. 881, confirming the date of accession of Nṛipatuṅga as A.D. 859, arrived at independently from other considerations in the scheme followed here.

The Bāhūr plates of Nṛipatuṅga,[4] dated in his eighth year (866), describe him as one who had helped the Pāṇḍya (unnamed) with an army, so that the Pāṇḍya could defeat a confederation of enemies on the banks of the river Arichit near Kumbakōṇam. The plates further state that even as a youth, he was lord of the world and eminent among kings, as his name Nṛipatuṅga signified and renowned not only in this country but even in the other land like Rāma. This appears to be an allusion to his part or help in the Pāṇḍyan invasion of Ceylon, which took place in the ninth year of Sēna II, i.e. 859-60.[5] All these indicate that he came to the throne very young and even in the year of his ascendancy he took part in the Pāṇḍyan affairs by lending his army. The most important Pāṇḍya contemporary of Nṛipatuṅga was Varaguṇa II, who, according to his dated Aivarmalai inscription, reckoned his regnal years from 862, a date which has been accepted without any doubt.[6] Two inscriptions of Varaguṇa read together in this context would support the fact that Varaguṇa was an ally of Nṛipatuṅga and that he was sojourning in Toṇḍai maṇḍalam round about the eighteenth year of Nṛipatuṅga. In the inscription at Tiruvadi (South Arcot) Varaguṇa, as the donor, dates his grant in the eighteenth year of Nṛipatuṅga.[7] The other inscription at Ambāsamudram in his own territory, dated in his 'four-plus-twelfth' year or sixteenth regnal year, states that he issued the grant from his camp at Araiśūr on the banks of the Peṇṇār in the Toṇḍai country.[8] Since it refers to the gift to a temple in his own territory, though issued from his camp in the Pallava country, he has dated it in his own regnal year in contrast to his gift to the

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 98.
[2] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 48.
[3] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1943-44, no. 138.
[4] *Epigraphia Indica*, XVIII, p. 10; *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, pp. 513-17, vv. 16-17.
[5] G. C. Mendis, *Early History of Ceylon* (Calcutta, 1948), p. 153.
[6] *Epigraphia Indica*, IX, pp. 86-88.
[7] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 71.
[8] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1905, no. 105.

Tiruvadi temple in the Pallava country, which he rightly dated in the regnal year of the ruler of the territory. Thus, Nṛipatuṅga's eighteenth year should be the same as or approximate to the sixteenth year of Varaguṇa. The eighteenth year of Nṛipatuṅga, as according to the scheme worked out here, would be A.D. 876 and the sixteenth year of Varaguṇa 877. This synchronism again confirms the date of accession of Nṛipatuṅga as 859 adopted here. His reign must have terminated in or immediately after his fortyfirst year, the date of his latest known record, which would be 899.

The contemporaneity of Nṛipatuṅga Pallava, Aparājita Pallava, Āditya I Chōḷa, Pṛithvīpati I and II Gaṅgas and Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya is clear from the inscriptions of the period, particularly the dated ones and their provenance in each other's territories. This would indicate that the times were not quite peaceful and Pallava rule in its last days was not quite uninterrupted and the throne uncontested. The date of accession of Āditya Chōḷa, viz. 870-71, as unequivocally fixed from astronomical details in his own Takkōlam inscription[1] of his twentyfourth year, would fall in the earlier half of Nṛipatuṅga's rule. The Chōḷa ascendancy must be in the interval, during which Nṛipatuṅga's records are not found in the Chōḷa country, i.e. after the seventh year (865) of Nṛipatuṅga, the date of his inscription at Nārttāmalai[2] in the Chōḷa country on the one hand, and before the inscriptions of his twentyfirst year at Kaṇḍiyūr,[3] twentysecond year at Tiruchennampūṇḍi,[4] twentythird year at Lālguḍi[5] and twentysecond and twentyfourth years referred to in Tirukkōḍikāval[6]—all on the banks of the Kāvērī between Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and Tañjāvūr, on the other, in the heart of Chōḷa-maṇḍalam. The period between the seventh year of Nṛipatuṅga, viz. 865, and the date of accession of Āditya, viz. 871, perhaps marks the time of Vijayālaya Chōḷa, the founder of the line, who started as a viceroy of the Pallavas in the area. No Parakēsari inscription can be assigned to Vijayālaya beyond any doubt, but an inscription of Vikrama Chōḷa from Kīḷputtūr[7] in North Arcot mentions a gift made in the fourth year of Vijayālaya. It is probable that he ruled only for four or five years as indicated above.

The Pallava power under Nṛipatuṅga appears for the most part to be confined to his own home country of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam as evidenced by the provenance of his inscriptions, except for short periods of expansion into the Chōḷa country as indicated by his inscriptions there. The earliest would be that of his second year at Lālguḍi[8] in the heart of the Chōḷa country and of seventh year at Nārttāmalai near the southern boundary of the Chōḷa country and his copper-plate grant of the eighth year from Bāhūr, on the northern confines of the Chōḷa country. The second spell of Pallava revival under Nṛipatuṅga in that country is marked by his inscriptions ranging from his twentyfirst to his twentyfourth years (879-82) in that area, as stated above. Curiously enough, though, according to an unimpeachable astronomical reckoning, Āditya I Chōḷa counts his regnal years from 871, the Chōḷa territory in the earlier half of his reign seems to have been occupied either by the Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa or by the Pallava Nṛipatuṅga. Varaguṇa has further left inscriptions dated in his own regnal years with astronomical details in that region which he overran. They are his Tiruveḷḷarai inscription, dated in his 'fourth-plus-ninth' year, the

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, V, no. 1368; *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, p. 85.
[2] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 63.
[3] *Ibid.*, V, no. 572.
[4] *Ibid.*, VII, nos. 521 and 522.
[5] *Ibid.*, IV, no. 531.
[6] *Ibid.*, XII, nos. 74 and 76.
[7] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1915, no. 164.
[8] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 61.

astronomical details of which would correspond to A.D. 874,[1] his Lālguḍi inscription of the 'fourth-plus-ninth' year also giving astronomical details in the same year[2] and his Javanthināthapuram[3] inscription, also of the same year, to mention a few. All this would show that between 874 and 884, viz. from the fifth to the fifteenth years of Āditya, the Chōḷa country was virtually under Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya and Nṛipatuṅga Pallava.

Nṛipatuṅga's inscriptions of the twentyfourth, twentyfifth and twentysixth years are also found in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam.[4] Inscriptions subsequent to his twentysixth and prior to that of his fortyfirst year at Maḍavalam in the northernmost confines of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam have not been found anywhere either in the Pallava or Chōḷa territories. This interval perhaps marks the period of Aparājita Pallava, who has left inscriptions almost continuously from year to year, ranging from the third to eighteenth years in the northern parts of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, viz. Saidapet, Ponnēri, Kāñchīpuram and Tiruttaṇi Taluks of Chingleput District.[5] No inscriptions of his has been found in the southern portions of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam or in the Chōḷa country.

APARĀJITAVARMAN (*circa* 885-903)

The famous battle of Śrīpuṟambiyam[6], which is to be identified with Tiruppuṟambiyam near Kumbakōṇam in Tañjāvūr District, where the Pallava king Aparājita met the Pāṇḍyan forces under Varaguṇa and gained a victory with the help of his Gaṅga ally Pṛithvīpati, who died in the battle, has also to be placed in this interval (884-99). This battle is mentioned only in the Udayēndiram plates of Pṛithvīpati II, grandson of Pṛithvīpati I, who, the plates say, fell at Śrīpuṟambiyam in defeating Varaguṇa and making Aparājita victorious. Since Varaguṇa is known to have been camping as an ally of Nṛipatuṅga in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam in 876-77, as stated above, the battle of Śrīpuṟambiyam is to be placed after this date. Pṛithvīpati I, who lost his life in this battle appears to be the same person as is mentioned in the inscription of the twentysixth year of Nṛipatuṅga from Āmbūr in North Arcot District; this would correspond to 884. If the eighteenth year of Nṛipatuṅga is found to be the same as the sixteenth year of Varaguṇa, the twentysixth regnal year of the former should be the twentyfourth regnal year of the latter, whose date of accession has been clearly fixed as 862. This would mean that Pṛithvīpati was owing allegiance to Nṛipatuṅga till about 884. This would advance the date of the battle further to 885 or immediately thereafter. This event should also have been before the Takkōlam inscription of the twentyfourth year of Āditya I, wherein Pṛithvīpati II figures as a donor making a gift in the heart of the Pallava country, dating the grant in the regnal years of the Chōḷa king Āditya, with clear astronomical details corresponding to 894-95. The battle in which Pṛithvīpati I died should have been fought in 885, the year following that when he is definitely known to have lived (884), and was old enough to have a grown-up grandson, Pṛithvīpati II. Mārasiṁha, the son of Pṛithvīpati I, who is casually mentioned in the Udayēndiram plates by his son Pṛithvīpati II,

[1] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1910, no. 84.

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, XX, pp. 52-53.

[3] *Ibid.*, XXVIII, pp. 38-42.

[4] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 75, Tirumukkūḍal, Chingleput District (twentyfourth year); *ibid.*, no. 79, Kāvēripākkam, North Arcot District (twentyfifth year); *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, pp. 193-94, Āmbūr, North Arcot District (twentysixth year).

[5] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, nos. 84-95.

[6] *Ibid.*, II, no. 76, v. 18.

either did not rule for long or predeceased his father, considering the interval between the death of Prithvīpati I and the Takkolam grant of Prithvīpati II. Āditya's part in this battle or his movements about this period are not quite clearly stated anywhere. He is not known from his inscriptions from his own home country till about this date (885), whereas only Nṛipatuṅga's and Varaguṇa's inscriptions are found in his territory. Perhaps it may be inferred that he was friendly to Aparājita and, if not at Śrīpurambiyam, he aided Aparājita in restoring order in the Pallava country, as his title '*Toṇḍai-nāḍu-pāviya*', mentioned in his Tillaisthānam inscription[1], would show. This would be further indicated by the fact that in the latter half of his reign, Āditya is seen to be sojourning in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam making grants in his own name and regnal years as if he were the sovereign. An inscription of unimpeachable date from Tirumālpuram, North Arcot District,[2] confirms the presence of Āditya as donor in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam in his twentyfirst-twentysecond years. Another inscription from Takkōlam is dated in his twentyfirst year (891-92) and calls the place Aparājita-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam,[3] indicating thereby that Aparājita should have come to power earlier than this date so that the place could be named after him. Furthermore, his inscriptions dated in his twentythird and twentyseventh years at Ukkal[4] (which is also called Aparājita-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam) and Neṛkuṉṟam,[5] North Arcot District, of the twentyfourth year at Takkōlam,[6] North Arcot District, of the twentysixth year at Uttira-mērūr,[7] Chingleput District, twentyseventh year at Brahmadēśam,[8] North Arcot District and at Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟam,[9] Chingleput District, of the same year, indicate that Āditya did not leave Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam till after his twentyseventh year (897), and thus his continuous stay in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam would range from about 890 to 897, if not afterwards.

It is generally assumed that Aparājita's career started soon after his victory at Śrīpurambiyam, which, according to the foregoing discussion, would be in 885. If so, since his records extend to eighteen years, he must have continued to rule up to 903. This period would include the stay of Āditya Chōḷa in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam between 890 and 897, and even later, perhaps to restore order in the Pallava dominion in support of Aparājita. That Āditya Chōḷa had full authority in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam at least in the southern half would be clear from the dating of his inscriptions in his own regnal years while making his grants in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and in renewing the former Pallava grant at Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟam. The Kanyākumārī inscription of Vīrarājēndra Chōḷa[10] states that his ancestor Āditya killed in battle a Pallava king seated on his elephant, while the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates[11] of Rājēndra Chōḷa state that Āditya fought against Aparājita, defeated him in battle and took possession of his country. While the equation of the Pallava king killed by Āditya with Aparājita, who is named as the defeated king, is not clearly stated, the identity has been assumed by many. It would appear in the context described above that Āditya had ultimately to defeat Aparājita more or less to terminate the Pallava power in order to expand the Chōḷa power further north in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. This event

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, III, no. 89.
[2] *Ibid.*, III, no. 142.
[3] *Ibid.*, XIII, no. 294.
[4] *Ibid.*, III, no. 1.
[5] *Ibid.*, III, no. 93.
[6] *Ibid.*, V, no. 1368; *Epigraphia Indica*, XX, p. 85.
[7] *South Indian Inscriptions*, VI, no. 360.
[8] *Ibid.*, XIII, no. 322.
[9] *Epigraphia Indica*, III, p. 277.
[10] *Travancore Archaeological Series*, III, pp. 142 ff.; *Epigraphia Indica*, XVIII, p. 42, v. 55.
[11] *South Indian Inscriptions*, III, no. 205, v. 49.

should, according to the above reckoning, be placed after 903, the eighteenth year of Aparājita, the last known date from his inscriptions. Nṛipatuṅga *is not known after 899*, in which year (fortyfirst regnal year), according to his Maḍavaḷam inscription, he appears to have re-emerged. Nṛipatuṅga may have been the Pallava king slain by Āditya as mentioned in the Kanyākumārī inscription. After all, it is possible that the Kanyākumārī inscription and the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates may be referring to two different events.

To revert to Nṛipatuṅga. He had two queens, Pṛithvīmāṇikkam, after whom the Vishṇu temple at Ukkal was named Bhuvanimāṇikka-Vishṇu-gṛiham,[1] and Vīramādēviyār, who performed the *hiraṇyagarbha* and *tulābhāra* and gifted gold to the Mahādēva temple at Tirukkōḍikāval.[2]

Nothing definite is stated anywhere about the actual relationship of Aparājita to Nṛipatuṅga. The name Kaṇḍaṉ Māṟambāvai, who calls herself a queen of Pallava-tilaka-kula Nandippōttaraiyar, evidently Nandivarman III, appears to be akin to the title Kaṇṭhan or Śrīkaṇṭha of Āditya Chōḷa I.[3] It is after this name that Tiruveṟumbūr, where the *vimāna* was built in the time of Āditya, for Āditya-bhaṭāraka, was called Śrīkaṇṭha-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam.[4] Āditya himself had two queens, one of Pallava extraction named Vayiri Akkaṉ, daughter of a Kāḍupaṭṭigaḷ,[5] and the other Śōḷapperumāṉār Iḷaṅgōṉpichchi, a Rāshṭrakūṭa princess,[6] whose son was named Ādityaṉ Kaṉṉaraṉ or Śōḷa Kaṉṉaradēva, brother of Parāntaka I. Perhaps Māṟambāvai was of Chōḷa blood and an elder sister of Āditya. Aparājita, with whom Āditya was friendly, was very probably the son of Nandi III through his queen Māṟambāvai. Nṛipatuṅga, on the other hand, is known from his Bāhūr plates to be another son of Nandivarman III through his Rāshṭrakūṭa queen Śaṅkhā. Evidently he was named after the title of his maternal grandfather Amōghavarsha Nṛipatuṅga, the name Nṛipatuṅga being otherwise unknown to Pallava genealogy. Thus, Nṛipatuṅga and Aparājita were perhaps step-brothers and rival claimants to the Pallava throne, the former supported by the Rāshṭrakūṭa and Pāṇḍya Varaguṇa and the latter by the Gaṅga, the Chōḷa and the Chēra. This assumption would, perhaps, support the overlap of the reigns of the two Pallava kings and the presence of inscriptions of the other powers in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and Chōḷa-maṇḍalam during this period.

In addition to the Vishṇu temple at Ukkal, inferred to be a construction of the time of Nṛipatuṅga, the structural additions to the smaller rock-cut Śiva cave-temple at Nārttāmalai may be mentioned. This cave-temple, called Paḷiyili-Īśvaram, which was excavated by the Muttaraiyar chief Śāttaṁ-Paḷiyili, had a structural *mukha-maṇḍapa*, *nandi-maṇḍapa* and *bali-pīṭha* added to it by his daughter Paḷiyili Śiṟiya Naṅgai in the seventh year of Nṛipatuṅga.[7] The Vīraṭṭānēśvara temple at Tiruttaṇi was constructed of black granite by Nambi Appi in the eighteenth year of Aparājita.[8] The structure of the temple affords an important landmark in the study of the transition of the architectural style from Pallava to Chōḷa. It is also interesting as the only extant all-stone, square, structural *vimāna* with apsidal *śikhara* of the Pallavas.

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[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, nos. 64 and 66.
[2] *Ibid.*, no. 74.
[3] This is a suggestion by T. N. Subrahmanyam, Editor, *South Indian Temple Inscriptions.*
[4] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XIII, nos. 88, 166 and 285.
[5] *Ibid.*, nos. 304 and 351.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. 323.
[7] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 63.
[8] *Ibid.*, nos. 94 and 95.

NANDIVARMAN IV (*circa* 904-26)

In spite of the fact that Āditya Chōḷa defeated Aparājita and slew a Pallava king and he and his son sought to establish Chōḷa rule over the Pallava country, Pallava power seems to have re-asserted itself for short periods of twentythree and thirtytwo years under Teḷḷāṟṟerinda Nandi (Nandi, the victor at Teḷḷāṟu) and Kampavarman. These two rulers appear to be important, since they have left a number of inscriptions and a few monuments in their names. There is also extant a Tamil work called *Nandikkalambakam*, a composition in different metres, in praise of Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi. The recently-discovered Karandai plates[1] of Rājēndra Chōḷa I mention Parāntaka as having vanquished in battle the lord of Ceylon, the Pāṇḍya king aṇd the Kēraḷa and the Pallava rulers. The victory over the Kēraḷa and Pallava rulers furnishes new and important information not found elsewhere. The Pallava adversary of Parāntaka needs to be identified.

As has already been stated, Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi is to be called Nandivarman IV as distinguished from Nandivarman III. Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi has left inscriptions both in the Pallava and Chōḷa countries dating up to his twentythird year, while Kampavarman's inscriptions are restricted to Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam alone dating up to his thirtysecond year. Two inscriptions, one from Śōḷapuram, North Arcot District,[2] which calls the temple there Nandi-Kampēśvara and another from Paḷḷikoṇḍa, in the same District, of the twelfth year of Parakēsari, which calls the place Nandi-Kampa-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam,[3] would indicate that Kampa was the son of Nandi.

The Śeṉṉivāykkāl inscription referred to above clearly states that Nandivarman (IV) got back his kingdom as a result of his victory at Teḷḷāṟu.[4] Besides Teḷḷāṟu, Nandivarman was, according to the *Nandikkalambakam*, victorious in many other battles at Kurugōḍu, Paḻaiyāṟu, Veḷḷāṟu and Naḷḷāṟu, and he was powerful not only in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam but also in the Chōḷa and Koṅgu countries. The same work also refers to his victories over his younger brothers, and the tradition is that the *Nandikkalambakam* was purposefully got composed by his brother with an intermixture of inauspicious words, lethal enough to kill the hero, on his hearing it recited, since he could not be killed otherwise. The *Kalambakam* describes him as a great patron of Tamil (*Paintamiḻai-āykiṉṟa Nandi*, verse 104, and *Tamiḻ Nandi*, verse 107). His titles mentioned are Avaninārāṇa, Viḍēl-viḍugu, Ukkiramakōpaṉ, Kuvalaya-Mārttāṇḍaṉ, Māludaiyaṉ, Mānōdaiyaṉ, Varatuṅgaṉ, Mānābharaṉ, Nandi-chchīrāmaṉ and Dēśa-bhaṇḍāri. His capital is mentioned as Kāñchī and his ports as Mallai (Mahābalipuram) and Mayilai (Mylapore) and his sway is said to have extended over Toṇḍai-nāḍu, Chōḷa-nāḍu, Chēra-nāḍu, Koṅgu-nāḍu, Aḻagai-nāḍu and Kuḍakku (western regions). His opponents in the battles were the Chōḷas, the Pāṇḍyas and the Chēras.[5] The period of rule of Nandivarman IV has to be fixed in relation to that of Kampavarman.

KAMPAVARMAN (*circa* 948-80)

The date of accession of Kampavarman, whose identity has sometimes been doubted, can be fixed with the help of his own and contemporary inscriptions. In the Madras

[1] *Journal of Oriental Research*, XIX, p. 150.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1902, no. 423; *South Indian Inscriptions*, VIII, no. 9.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1925, no. 474.

[4] For a fuller discussion about Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi, see *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, III, pt. i, Introduction, pp. XLVIII to LX.

[5] *Indian Antiquary*, XXXVII, pp. 170-74.

Museum plates of the sixteenth year of Uttamachōḷa[1], corresponding to 984-85, which enumerate, obviously in chronological order, former gifts to the temple, a gift in the ninth year of Kampavarman is specified after a gift in the twentysecond year of Parakēsari Parāntaka, i.e. 928-29. This would place Kampa before the date of the copper-plates, viz. 984-85, and after the twentysecond year of Parāntaka, viz. 928-29. The inscriptions from Sōḷapuram help in further reducing the above range and in fixing the date of accession of Kampa as 948-49. One of them,[2] dated in the eighth year of Vijaya Kampa, states that the western Gaṅga Rājāditya Mahādēva built a *paḷḷippaḍai* or memorial-shrine to his father Pṛithvīgaṅgaraiyar at the place of his eternal rest. The Sanskrit part of the inscription mentions the name Hastivarman. Another inscription,[3] dated Śaka 871, besides stating that Rāshṭrakūṭa Kannara conquered Rājāditya Chōḷa, son of Parāntaka I, and entered Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam after slaying him, mentions also another date, viz. the second regnal year of an unspecified king as contemporary with the above date.[4] The inscription refers to the construction of a tank in memory of Kaḷḷinaṅgai, who died at Aruṅguṉṟam and whose father was Kannara Pṛithvīgaṅgaraiyar, son of Vayiri Aḍiyāṉ of Paṅgaḷa-nāḍu and mother Kāmākkanār *alias* Gaṅgamādēviyār, daughter of the Bāṇa chief Vāṇakkōvaraiyar Oṟṟiyūruḍaiyāṉ. This inscription would indicate that Pṛithvīgaṅgaraiyar assumed the title of Kannaradēva Pṛithvīgaṅga after the Rāshṭrakūṭa conquest of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam which was over by Śaka 871, i.e. A.D. 949-50, and lived thereafter. A third inscription,[5] dated in Śaka 875, under the name of the same Gaṅga chief who is described as Hastimalla Kannaradēva Pṛithvīpati, mentions a gift to the same temple (Nandikampēśvara), showing that he was alive in 953-54 as a Rāshṭrakūṭa subordinate

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, no. 128.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1902, no. 429; *Epigraphia Indica*, VII, p. 193.

[3] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1902, no. 428; *Epigraphia Indica*, VII, p. 195.

[4] Taking into consideration the facts mentioned in the two inscriptions, one of Kannaradēva dated Śaka 879 and the other of his Western Gaṅga feudatory Būtuga II found on the same memorial-stone at Āṭakūr, Māṇḍyā District, Mysore State (*Epigraphia Indica*, VI, pp. 50-57), it cannot be asserted that Śaka 871 mentioned in the Sōḷapuram inscription was exactly synchronous with the battle of Takkōlam, the death of Rājāditya Chōḷa and Kannara's entry into Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. The Āṭakūr record implies that by Śaka 872, Kannara, having attacked Rājāditya Chōḷa and having fought and killed him at Takkōlam, was going in triumph, while in the subjoined inscription of Būtuga, it is stated that in the battle between Kannara and Chōḷa, it was Būtuga that stabbed Rājāditya in a treacherous embrace, fought and killed him. Furthermore, two inscriptions dated in the fifth and seventh years of Kannaradēva, found in Siddhaliṅgamaḍam, South Arcot District (*Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1909, no. 375), and Peruvayal, Chingleput District (*ibid.*, 1941-42, no. 81), give the title *Kachchiyum Tañjaiyum-koṇḍa* to Kannaradēva, indicating that he had already taken in battle Kāñchī and Tañjāvūr, before the dates of these two inscriptions, viz. 943 and 945. The anticipatory deployment of large Chōḷa forces in Naḍu-nāḍu between Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and Chōḷa-maṇḍalam, under prince Rājāditya (*ibid.*, 1905-06, p. 81; *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, nos. 954-78), his brother Arikulakēsari (*Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1902, no. 280; *Epigraphia Indica*, VII, p. 141) and general Veḷḷāṉ Kumaraṉ (*Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1905, no. 739) from 936-40 and perhaps thereafter, is significant. The fact that Kannara ascended the throne in 939 would place the Rāshṭrakūṭa wars and the battle of Takkōlam between the years 940 and 943. Perhaps while the bulk of the Chōḷa army was engaged in the north with the crown prince at its head, Tañjāvūr was also simultaneously attacked from the rear from the southern Mysore country, the home of Gaṅga Būtuga, while Kāñchī was captured in the northern front. The change brought about by Parāntaka in the Bāṇa country and the placing of it in the hands of the friendly Gaṅga was also strategic. The idea was to strengthen the northern and north-western frontiers of the Chōḷa country even if Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam were to be threatened, and also perhaps to prevent the expansion of the Pallava rule under Kampavarman into the Chōla country as it did under Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi.

[5] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1901, no. 346; *Epigraphia Indica*, VII, p. 196.

in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, four years after the inscription from the same place mentioning the invasion of Kṛishṇa III. He is known to have been dead by the eighth year of Kampavarman, when his son Rājādityamahādēva erected the sepulchral shrine. The eighth year of Kampavarman, whose rule could be fixed from Uttamachōḷa's copper-plates any time between 929 and 985, could not therefore be earlier than 953-54, the date of Hastimalla's own inscription dated Śaka 875. It cannot also be much later after this. Further, the second year of an unspecified king in the inscription which mentions it as synchronous with Śaka 871 (949-50) cannot obviously refer itself to the regnal years of the Rāshṭrakūṭa, who is known to have ascended the throne in 939, since Śaka 871, will really be his ninth or tenth regnal year and not his second regnal year. Nor can it refer to the Chōḷa Rājāditya who was defeated and killed. Thus, for all intents it can only refer to the second regnal year of Kampa, who was perhaps the protégé of the Rāshṭrakūṭa, making the date of accession of Kampavarman correspond to Śaka 870 (A.D. 948-49), i.e. the year before the second year, Śaka 871. Kampa's eighth year, according to the above reckoning, would correspond to 955-56, immediately following the last known date of Hastimalla, i.e. 953-54, before which year he had obviously died and a shrine was erected over his remains by his son Rājāditya in the following year.[1]

Having thus fixed Kampa's date of accession as 948-49, the period of rule of his predecessor Nandi IV of Teḷḷāṟu is to be fixed in the interval between 903, the last year of Aparājita, and 948 the year of the accession of Kampa. Though this is not without difficulties, a tentative attempt can be made. His latest inscription with the title Teḷḷāṟṟeṟinda is of the twentysecond year.[2] Inscriptions of the latter half of his rule are found in the Chōḷa country, where Chōḷa Parāntaka I had commenced his rule in 907 and was mostly engrossed in his Pāṇḍyan and Siṁhaḷa wars which had started earlier than his third year. Nandi's inscriptions are also found in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam comprising parts of Chingleput and North Arcot Districts.

Perhaps Nandivarman IV was the Pallava who had to be defeated by Parāntaka at some stage, as mentioned in the Karandai plates.

Nandivarman's Śeṉṉivāykkāl inscription, which is a hero-stone, besides mentioning him as the victor at Teḷḷāṟu and the retriever of his kingdom, mentions another event, viz. a raid by a band of Śeuṇa horsemen under Māvali, a Bāṇa chieftain 'ruling from outside his territory'. This event was perhaps a corollary to what is mentioned in the Udayēndiram plates of the sixteenth year of Parāntaka I (i.e. 923), which state that the Bāṇa was dispossessed of his territory by Parāntaka, who installed the Gaṅga there instead.

Parāntaka's replacement of the Bāṇa by the Gaṅga Pṛithvīpati II must have taken place before the sixth year of Parāntaka, i.e. 913, in which year, according to an inscription from Puḷḷamaṅgai, Gaṅga Pṛithvīpati figures as a donor in the sixth year of Parakēsari.[3] This is further confirmed by the Shōḷiṅghur inscription of the ninth year of Parakēsari, identified with Parāntaka; it mentions the executor of the grant as Gaṅga Pṛithvīpati Hastimalla, who is expressly stated in the inscription as having been made Bāṇādhirāja and as one who distinguished himself in the battle with the Vallabha (Rāshṭrakūṭa).[4] The twentyfirst year of Teḷḷāṟṟu Nandi, which mentions the Bāṇa raid, should be after 913.

[1] For a fuller discussion, see *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, III, pt. i, Introduction, pp. LXXXVI-XC.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 57.
[3] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1921, no. 599.
[4] *Ibid.*, 1896, no. 9; *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, p. 221.

The Śennivāykkāl raid by the displaced Bāṇa, evidently Vikramāditya II, at the head of the Śeuṇa horses must have been also in retaliation of Parāntaka's act.[1] A hero-stone inscription in Kannaḍa from Hēmāvatī, Anantapur District, dated Śaka 845 (A.D. 923), which mentions the death of Eḍeyamma, son of Hāṛitta, after a brave fight against the Śeuṇa cavalry, indicates clearly the presence of the Śeuṇa cavalry to the north-west of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam about and after that date.[2] The raid of Śennivāykkāl, in the heart of the Chōḷa country further south, by the Śeuṇa cavalry, which obviously belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭas, under Bāṇa leadership should be placed a year or two after the Hēmāvatī raid, i.e. about 924 at the earliest. If this was the twentyfirst year of Nandi, he must have retrieved his kingdom in *circa* 904, probably from the hands of Āditya, who is known to have continued his stay in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam till his death in Toṇḍaimāṉ Āṟṟūr in Chittoor District, near Kāḷahasti, and was in virtual possession of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. As already stated, Nandi IV ruled for about twentythree years (till *circa* 926), after which both Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and Chōḷa-maṇḍalam passed into the hands of Chōḷa Parāntaka.

But the rise of Kampavarman to power and the disastrous Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion and the battle of Takkōlam, perhaps in support of Kampavarman, evidently upset Parāntaka's calculations in stationing a large army in Naḍu-nāḍu as mentioned earlier. However, Kampavarman's rule was restricted to parts of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam alone and the undated Olakkūr inscription[3] of Kampavarman, mentioning a raid followed by devastation of the place by his elephant corps, would indicate an attempt of Kampavarman to penetrate the northern borders of the Chōḷas.

Kampavarman, who began his rule in 948 was, according to his Uttiramērūr record,[4] born in the asterism Svāti in the month of Āvaṇi and his reign extended to thirty-two years, marking the close of Pallava power.

Subsequent to the Rāshṭrakūṭa invasion, the Gaṅgas, under Pṛithvīpati Hastimalla and his son Rājāditya, seem to have changed their allegiance to the Pallava and Rāshṭrakūṭa as the Śōḷapuram records show. Before the tenth year of Kampavarman, as is stated in the Mēlpaṭṭi inscription,[5] the Bāṇas seem to have attempted to regain their territory from the Gaṅgas. The hero-stone inscription states that the Kāvidi or the Bāṇa general, who took Perunagar, fell when he opposed the army of Pṛithvīpati Gaṅga stationed at Kāvannūr. This Gaṅga is known to be dead in the eighth year of Kampa. So the event should have been before the eighth year, though the hero-stone was set up later in the tenth year of Kampa. Another inscription from Mallam[6] in Nellore District is interesting, since it narrates the event of a person offering his own head to Durgā, in addition to showing that Kampa's power extended over parts of Nellore, besides Chittoor, North Arcot and Chingleput Districts.

The shrines at Śōḷapuram,[7] Tiruvoṟṟiyūr[8] and Kāvāntaṇḍalam[9] appear to have been constructed in his reign.

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[1] *South Indian Temple Inscriptions*, III, pt. ii, Introduction, pp. XLVIII-LII.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XI, no. 22.
[3] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 112.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI, no. 371.
[5] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 111; *Epigraphia Indica*, XXIII, p. 147.
[6] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 106.
[7] *Epigraphia Indica*, VII, p. 193.
[8] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 105.
[9] *Ibid.*, VII, nos. 420-21.

Thus, the reigns of Nandivarman IV and Kampavarman marked the last stages of Pallava rule before its total annihilation and the rise of the Imperial Chōḷa power, which started under Āditya and Parāntaka and reached its peak under Rājarāja I and Rājēndra I in the first quarter of the eleventh century.

PALLAVA KINGS OF THE SIṀHAVISHṆU LINE (Kāñchī-Pallavas)

SIṀHAVARMAN

1 Siṁhavishṇu (550-80)
2 Mahēndravarman I (580-630)
3 Narasiṁhavarman I Māmalla (630-68)
4 Mahēndravarman II (668-72)
5 Paramēśvaravarman I (672-700)
6 Narasiṁhavarman II Rājasiṁha (700-28)
7 Mahēndravarman III (720-28)
(joint rule with the above)
8 Paramēśvaravarman II (728-31)

Bhīmavarman
Buddhavarman
Ādityavarman
Govindavarman
Hiraṇyavarman

(DYNASTIC REVOLUTION)

9 Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (732-96)
10 Dantivarman (796-846)
11 Nandivarman III (846-59)
12 Nṛipatuṅgavarman (859-99)
13 Aparājitavarman (885-903)
14 Nandivarman IV (904-26)
15 Kampavarman (948-80)

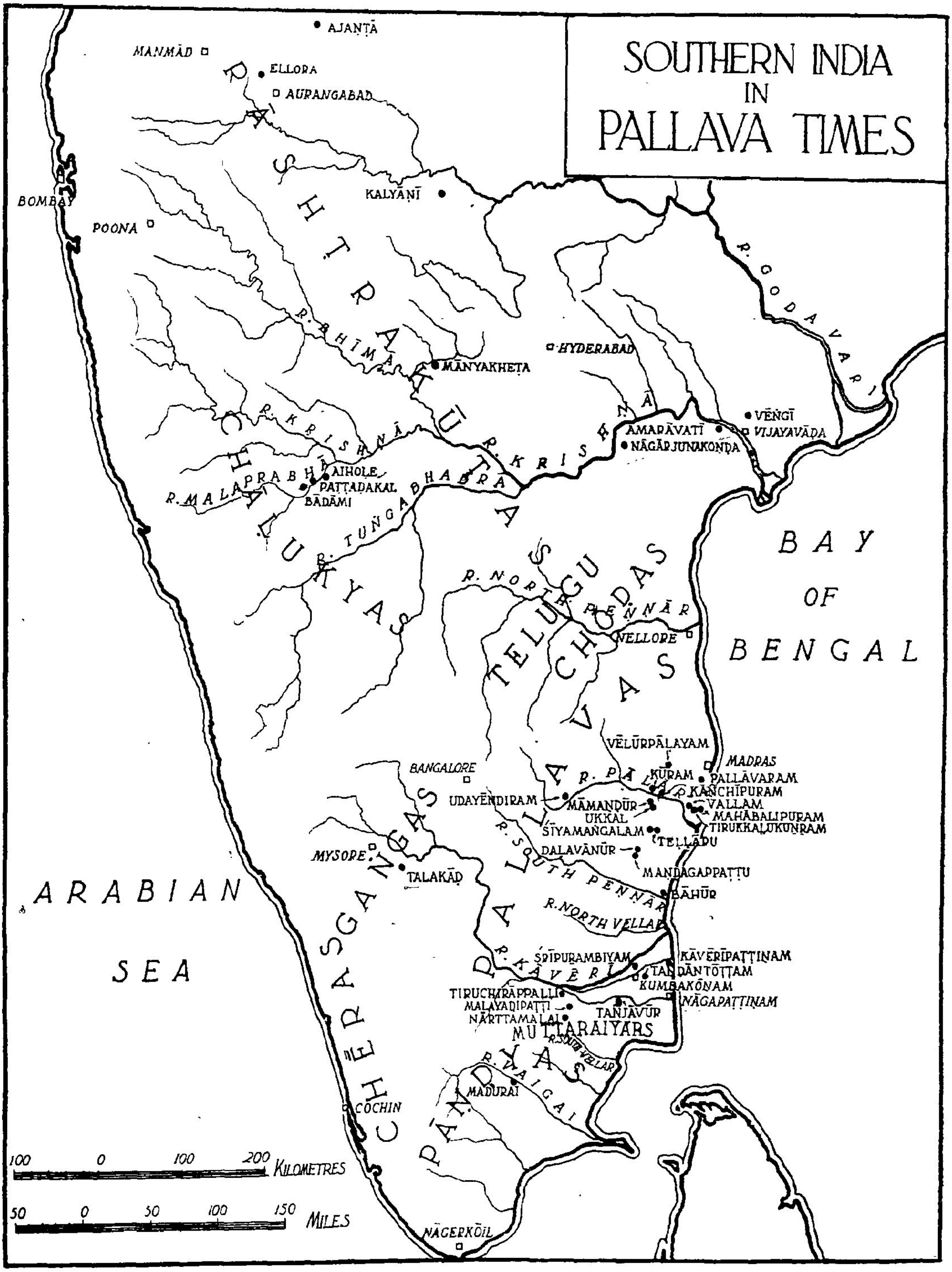
SOUTHERN INDIA
IN
PALLAVA TIMES
AJANṬĀ
MANMĀD
ELLORA
AURANGABAD
KALYĀṆĪ
BOMBAY
POONA
R. GODAVARI
HYDERABAD
MĀNYAKHETA
R. BHĪMĀ
R. KRISHṆĀ
RASHTRAKŪTAS
VĒṄGĪ
VIJAYAVĀḌA
AMARĀVATĪ
NĀGĀRJUNAKOṆḌA
AIHOLE
PAṬṬADAKAL
BĀDĀMI
R. MALAPRABHĀ
R. TUṄGABHADRĀ
CHALUKYAS
BAY
OF
BENGAL
R. NORTH PENNĀR
TELUGU CHODAS
NELLORE
PALLAVAS
VĒLŪRPĀLAYAM
MADRAS
KŪRAM
PALLĀVARAM
KĀÑCHĪPURAM
BANGALORE
UDAYĒNDIRAM
MĀMANḌŪR
UKKAL
VALLAM
MAHĀBALIPURAM
TIRUKKALUKUNRAM
SĪYAMAṄGALAM
TELLĀRU
DALAVĀNŪR
MANDAGAPPATTU
R. PĀLĀR
R. SOUTH PENNĀR
MYSORE
TALAKĀḌ
BĀHŪR
ARABIAN
SEA
R. NORTH VELLAR
GANGAS
ŚRĪPURAMBIYAM
KĀVĒRĪPAṬṬINAM
R. KĀVĒRĪ
TAṆḌANTŌṬṬAM
KUMBAKŌṆAM
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI
NĀGAPAṬṬINAM
MALAYAḌIPAṬṬI
NĀRTTAMALAI
TAÑJĀVŪR
MUTTARAIYARS
R. SOUTH VELLAR
CHĒRAS
PĀṆḌYAS
R. VAIGAI
MADURAI
COCHIN
100 0 100 200 KILOMETRES
50 0 50 100 150 MILES
NĀGERKŌIL

FIG. 1

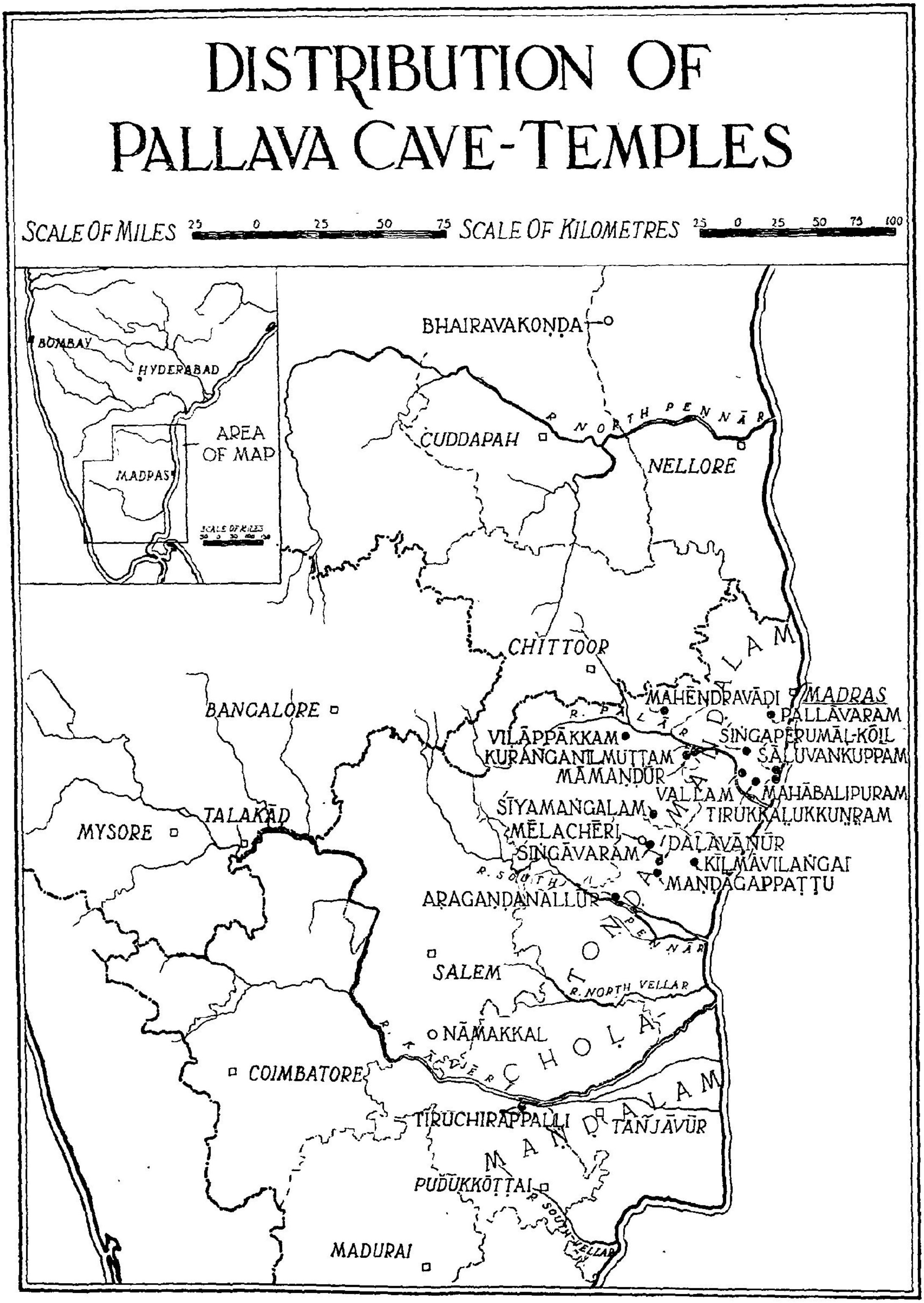
DISTRIBUTION OF
PALLAVA CAVE-TEMPLES
SCALE OF MILES 25 0 25 50 75
SCALE OF KILOMETRES 25 0 25 50 75 100
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
AREA OF MAP
MADRAS
BHAIRAVAKONDA
R. NORTH PENNĀR
CUDDAPAH
NELLORE
CHITTOOR
BANGALORE
MAHENDRAVĀDI
MADRAS
PALLĀVARAM
VILĀPPĀKKAM
SINGAPERUMĀL-KOIL
KURANGANILMUTTAM
SĀLUVANKUPPAM
MĀMANDŪR
VALLAM
MAHĀBALIPURAM
SĪYAMANGALAM
TIRUKKALUKKUNRAM
MYSORE
TALAKĀD
MĒLACHĒRI
DALAVĀNŪR
SINGĀVARAM
KILMĀVILANGAI
MANDAGAPPATTU
R. SOUTH PENNĀR
ARAGANDANALLŪR
TONDAIMANDALAM
SALEM
R. NORTH VELLAR
NĀMAKKAL
R. KĀVĒRI
CHOLAMANDALAM
COIMBATORE
TIRUCHIRAPPALLI
TANJĀVŪR
PUDUKKŌTTAI
R. SOUTH VELLAR
MADURAI

Fig. 2

CHAPTER III

PALLAVA ROCK-CUT ARCHITECTURE

THE PALLAVAS WERE POINEERS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY BRICK- and timber-architecture of the south into more permanent stone and in the tackling of harder and less tractable rocks such as granite, charnockite and gneiss in the excavation of their cave-temples (fig. 2) and the carving of their monoliths (*rathas*), as opposed to their contemporaries, the Chāḷukyas, who chose the much softer and more tractable sandstone in the excavation of their cave-temples and in the construction of their structural temples. The choice of softer rocks by the Chāḷukyas was intentional and was made in view of the facility not only of quarrying but also of carving fine reliefs and designs. The authors of the earlier rock-cut architecture in western India and the western Deccan area likewise deliberately chose the trap-formations, as at Ajaṇṭā, Aurangābād, Kārlē, Bhājā, Nāsik and other places in that area, for making the numerous Buddhist *chaityas* and *vihāras*. The same is to be said of the excavations and the large monoliths at Elephanta and Ellora including the Kailāsa. In the Western Ghāṭs and the Deccan round about Nāsik, to a distance of about 200 miles, marking the region of these western Indian cave-temples, the amygdaloid and cognate trap-formations of considerable thickness and marked uniformity of structure with the edges of their strata terminating in nearly perpendicular cliffs, provided the ideal surface for the rock-architecture in that area. This feature enabled easy quarrying in large blocks by the pick and finishing of the surface to the desired smoothness by a series of feathering strokes by hammer and chisel. The compact and fine-grained sandstone hills of similar, if not greater tractability, at Aihoḷe, Paṭṭaḍakal and Bādāmi, the centre of the early Chāḷukyas, lent themselves to the magnificent creations and fine workmanship of this dynasty. The sandstone hills at Udayagiri, near Vidiśā, afforded the terrain for the earlier Gupta workmen, who excavated the series of cave-temples there. A similar purposeful choice of suitable soft material will also explain the location of cave-temples and other forms of rock-architecture and sculpture such as those on the Eastern Ghāṭs, e.g. at Śaṅkaram and Guṇṭupalle in the Āndhra area and Khaṇḍagiri and Udayagiri in Orissa, where the caves are cut into the coarse sandstone hills outcropping from the local lateritic terrain. The partiality for the use of sandstone for sculptural work and the fashioning of architectural members, including the famous columns, umbrellas and *tōraṇas*, commenced with the Mauryas. While in the rock-architecture and sculpture of the succeeding epochs, both sandstone and trap-formations scattered in different parts of the country have been greatly employed, in the Kṛishṇā valley the local marble-like limestone has been greatly exploited, as in the Buddhist *stūpas* at Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Jaggayyapēṭa, etc. The successors of the early Chāḷukyas in the Deccan and the Mysore country, who elaborated the Chāḷukyan style of south Indian temples, continued to choose and employ in their structural temples sandstone and subsequently other soft schistoze material, including the bluish black or green chloritic schists and steatite or soapstones—more fine-grained, compact and softer materials. In working such materials the later Western Chāḷukyas and Hoysaḷas excelled their predecessors, who had worked in sandstone, in point of the immensity and technique of carving. The rock-cut cave-temples at Vijayavāḍa and Guṇṭūr on either bank of the Kṛishṇā are excavated into the

coarser sandstone hills, while the series at Bhairavakoṇḍa in Nellore District are excavated out of the large steatite-like schist outcrop amidst the local Veligoṇḍa hills of the Udayagiri range bordering on the Cuddapah and Kurnool Districts on the one side and Nellore District on the other.

It was the Pallavas alone who chose the hardest of the rocks, viz. granite, gneiss and charnockite, primarily because of the absence of softer rock cliffs in their area and also perhaps, because they thought the local hard rocks were more durable and an altogether new material not tackled by their compeers and rivals, the Chāḷukyas, or even their predecessors. Mahēndra Pallava, who initiated such work in the south, was really a *Vichitra-chitta* (inventive or curious-minded), as he styled himself, in this respect also. In the whole range of 'rock-architecture' in India, the only other achievements of this kind are the seven Ājīvaka caves in the Barābar and Nāgārjunī hills near Gayā, and one more at Sītāmarhi near Rājagṛiha, both in Bihar, making eight in all and dating between the time of Aśōka and his grandson Daśaratha. Here, for the first time in India, one sees the large boulder-like masses of hard quartzose gneiss forming this range quarried with infinite labour and finished with an enamel-like polish. This technique of quarrying, carving and polishing started and ended here within the same century, and it was not till after about a thousand years that the Pallavas started excavating into hard stone again in south India. The intermediate tradition, as noted above, was thus wholly a tradition of work on deliberately chosen softer and often coarser rock-material where, in place of the fine Mauryan polish of the Chunār sandstone, the finished but comparatively rough surfaces of the walls were plastered smooth and often painted (as at Ajaṇṭā, Ellora, Bādāmi and other places), the reliefs and sculptures too being covered with appropriately painted stucco as was probably the practice in contemporary brick structures as well.

The Pallavas, as well as the other contemporary south Indian dynasties, who excavated into hard rock, did not do any polishing but continued the tradition of plastering the interiors often with paintings, or covering the carvings and reliefs with painted stucco, e.g. at Māmaṇḍūr, Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, Śittaṉṉavāśal, Tirumayam, Tirumalāpuram and Tirunandikkara.

Considering the nature of the formation and the hardness of the rock, the technique of excavation of the cave-temples, as also the carving of the monoliths, had naturally to differ from that employed in the other cases where the tackled material was the softer sandstone, trap and the like and where the initial quarrying could be done in large blocks by the pick. While no traces of the methods of the excavation of the gneiss caves in the Barābar group exist, we have in the south—in the Pallava, the Pāṇḍya and the intermediate territory—specimens of work left off at different stages from commencement to completion, that would illustrate the technique employed in excavation and finish. That the whole could have been only laborious hammer- and chisel-work, as is now employed by the living masons, among whom are reputed *sthapatis*, temple-builders and sculptors, would be clear from a study of the unfinished excavations (pl. I). Initially, the chosen face of the rock was cut into to an appropriate depth till a vertical scarp of the desired height could be obtained; sometimes such cutting into the sloping face of a rock extended in depth to more than 12 to 15 ft. at the bottom and a comparatively lesser distance at the top. In these rocks which have a straight cleavage, this was perhaps done, as it is done today,[1] by jumping with hammer and chisel, a line of wedge-shaped holes about 1 in. square and as much deep at short intervals. A number of flat-edged iron wedges (*āppu* in Tamil) of the same thickness were inserted into these holes and

[1] This is called *aṛavaḍittal* by the stone-workers of the Tamil Districts.

driven in with a heavy hammer, the strokes made over all the wedges in position. The pressure and, to some extent, the concussion of the enclosed air split the rock to a considerable extent downwards, which could thus be removed in sizable pieces. Having obtained the desired surface of suitable dimensions, the actual quarrying was made by blocking out the face of the prepared scarp into large squares of about 2 ft. and cutting grooves all round the squares to a depth of about 2 to 3 in., so that the squares themselves project out as reliefs. The projecting material of these squares was then subsequently chiselled off by lateral and centripetal strokes starting from the grooves all round and reduced to the level of the peripheral grooves. This process was repeated. The progress of the quarrying was kept uniform over the entire region, thus maintaining an even depth of excavation at every stage. While doing so, the positions of the façade-pillars and other members, which were to be left intact, were roughly marked and the excavation in the above manner continued into the intervening spaces. The general architectural members, such as pillars, beams and cornices, that were thus demarcated were finished finally by a more careful chiselling, in which work the feathering strokes predominated, so that smooth or even surfaces were obtained according to the granulation and texture of the rock. Very often, it is noticed from the extant examples that while the rough-quarrymen went excavating inside, a second set followed finishing the details from outside inwards and from above downwards, as would be indicated by the finished façades in some cave-temples with still incomplete interiors and comparatively more finished tops and less finished bases.[1]

Owing to the hardness of the material and consequently the greater time that would be taken for work on it, the resulting excavation could only be of lesser depth, height and width, as compared with those made into the softer rocks of the Deccan and western India. The carving and other sculptural embellishments, at least in the earlier stages, had to be obviously limited in quantity and executed in semi-relief and large size, in contrast to the numerous smaller, and in some cases almost cut-out, reliefs and more intricate carvings in the trap and sandstone excavations of contemporary or earlier origin elsewhere. These softer rocks, which would lend themselves to fine carving, would naturally have tempted the worker, steeped in a long tradition of carving in wood and similar light material, to translate them with the same profusion and richness in the new, but equally tractable and more permanent, stone material. For instance, the southern *tōraṇa* of the Sāñchī *stūpa* was made by the ivory-carvers of Vidiśā, proving that it was the craftsmen and workers in applied and minor arts who turned sculptors. This is emphasized by the fact that it is the same softer materials, like sandstone, trap, schist, limestone or soapstone, that continued to form the building materials of subsequent structural temples in medieval and post-medieval times and the mason-sculptors exhibited the same tendency for greater and cloying embellishment even at the sacrifice of architectural effect.

In the case of the hard rock which the Pallavas, the Pāṇḍyas and their contemporaries in the south excavated or carved and which their successors used in building, the process had naturally to be different. As a result, the older cave-temples and monoliths and later stone structures of this region present a greater architectural effect, sometimes tending to the severe, with more plain faces and less of ornament and sculpture. The few carvings, ornamental or sculptural, that occur are pronounced and confined to particular regions only of the architectural composition, thereby resulting in a balance of architecture and decoration. The Pallava workmen were dealing with an altogether new rock material of unknown mass and strength. The pillars in the earliest specimens were, therefore, left plain, square in section, or, to be more artistic, square and octagonal, in sections,

[1] Pl. I illustrates the various stages described here.

and the massive corbels plain without much embellishment, whatever embellishment these needed being supplied by a thin coat of plaster and painting. For similar reasons also the inter-columniation was much reduced in proportion to the massiveness of the pillars, as also the height of the pillars themselves, thereby making the façades of the excavations appear smaller in comparison with the larger and bolder façades of the excavations of the contemporary and earlier series into the more tractable material of other places, in the working of which the designers had the added advantage of experience extending over a few centuries. Thus, the plainer and less ornamental pillars in this series of rock-excavations in the south stand in contrast to the fully-formed pillars of diverse types, complete with all the mouldings of the various components as base, shaft, capital and corbel, in the contemporary Chāḷukyan and Rāshṭrakūṭa examples.

Mahēndravarman's declaration in his own inscription at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, obviously the first of his cave-temples, is significant. He says that as a *Vichitra-chitta*, he was the first to make a habitation in stone for the three gods (Brahmā, Śiva and Vishṇu) without the use of brick, timber, metal or mortar, the conventional ingredients of contemporary and earlier structures in the south; this would, therefore, refer more to the fact of his having chosen the hardest of the rocks and his natural exultation in his successful achievement of scooping out the first temple named after him than to the mere introduction of rock-cut cave-temples in the south. The fact of excavating a temple or a habitation for a monk into the rocks could not have been unknown in south India, which was in live contact with the other parts of India, where such excavations had been common, particularly the Buddhist excavations. Nearer home, on the west coast and what now forms Keraḷa, caves of a sepulchral nature[1] were excavated into the laterite cliffs, some even with vaulted domes and others with catacomb-like side-cells, which by their contents are linked with the other Iron Age megalithic monuments elsewhere in south India. Such expressions as occur in early Tamil literature in more than one context, comparing structures with those excavated into or carved out of rock, would also indicate that the people were no strangers to rock-cut abodes or shrines[2]. Perhaps the non-availability of considerable soft rock-cliffs of desired strength and texture in this part of the country explains the absence of earlier excavations barring the laterite cave-tombs of the west coast. These excavated cave-tombs appear to have been called *taḷi* as the place-names where these occur, e.g. *Taḷipparamba*, *Parambantaḷi*, etc., would indicate. This is confirmed by a Pallava inscription of Dantivarman at Malaiyadippaṭṭi (Pudukkōṭṭai), Tiruchirāppaḷḷi District, where the author of the cave-temple says that he excavated the hill 'in the form of a *taḷi*' and installed Śiva therein.[3] The rock-cut cave-temples and the subsequent structural temples came to be called *taḷi* in contemporary and later inscriptions. The absence of early stone sculpture in the south is also to be attributed to the same cause. The novelty, therefore, of Mahēndravarman's work would lie primarily in his first tangible achievement, viz. the excavation into the hard local rock.

These monolithic cave-temples like the monolithic *vimānas*, known popularly as *rathas*, are but petrified versions of contemporary brick- and timber-architecture. While in the cave-temples, which are cut into the rocks, the architectural aspects of the interiors only of the brick and timber prototypes can be reproduced, occasionally along with the exterior frontal aspects of the same on their façades in relief, in the monolithic *vimānas* or *rathas*, on the other hand, which are cut out of entire rocks or boulders, the

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[1] *Ancient India*, no. 2, (1946), p. 11; also *ibid.*, no. 12, (1956), pp. 93-115.

[2] *Kuṉṟu-kuyiṉṟaṉṉa-ōṅgunilai-vāyil* (*Neḍunalvāḍai*, l. 88); *Varai-kuyiṉṟaṉṉa vāṉṟōy-neḍunakar* (*Ahanāṉūṟu*, 93, l. 12).

[3] *Inscriptions of the Pudukkōṭṭai State* (Texts), no. 18.

total external aspect of the brick-and-timber originals can be reproduced in full, as also much of their interior aspects in the *maṇḍapas* and shrines excavated into them. Such a fashioning of architectural forms out of the living rock is best described by Percy Brown as 'rock architecture'[1] as differentiated from true architecture which would connote 'construction' and 'building up', and according to its usually accepted definition would be 'good construction truthfully expressed'. The excavation of these cave-temples or the carving of the *rathas* are 'monolithic', and, though expert achievements by themselves, they do not involve constructional principles or display in their members any functional properties; nor are they designed to support loads or counteract thrusts. Rock-architecture, therefore, is not architecture in intent and purpose, but sculpture on a grand and magnificent scale. Thus, as sculptured stone-copies they reproduce faithfully every detail of the original wooden construction—even those parts or members which in a monolith would be unnecessary and functionless, such as the ribbing below the cornices and eaves, the nails with their boss-heads, and the timbering and curved rafters below roofs, domes and vaults. Such an imitative reproduction of the details of the timbering even to the fastenings and joints of wooden originals in the living rock, which shows itself for the first time in the earliest caves near Gayā and the Buddhistic cave-temples of western India, where the excavators who wrought them were still thinking in terms of wood and brickwork of the traditional architectural forms, is found to be carried down for more than a thousand years to the cave-temples of the sixth to tenth centuries A.D. This tendency is carried beyond even to the later structural temples at a time when principles of designing and constructional technique in stone were gradually understood and evolved and in which material most of them would have no meaning. It has, however, persisted through the centuries to even recent stone constructions. But these exact imitations changed in course of time into conventional motifs, such as the projecting ends of the timber beams and rafters in brick and timber temples decorated with *vyāla* or *haṁsa* or *makara* reliefs transforming into regular decorative friezes, with less spacing between the reliefs as the art progressed, or the lotus-reliefs in stone indicating the original nail-heads of timberwork. The *Śilpa*-works, which canonized the current traditions at various stages, though prescribing all the three traditional materials of construction, viz. timber, brick and stone, insist at the same time on the provision of the conventions as perquisite details and decorations of the appropriate courses. These, for example, are the friezes—*vyāla*, *haṁsa* or *bhūta-mālās* with *makara*-head terminations at the corners or *padma* and other *bandhas*, imitative of the metal ringing of the wooden pillars and *kōṇa-paṭṭas* simulating the bracings of the roof-planks or eaves-boards. Far from indicating any servile mentality on the part of the stone-workers, this would indicate two things: first, throughout the centuries the traditionally accepted architectural fabric was brick, and timber was in simultaneous use in building, so that the forms of architectural construction appropriate to them were evolving; secondly, the stone forms were to be mostly replicas of the contemporary timber or brick forms, the reproduction being faithful to the extent the unusual material admitted.

This conservatism extended more to sculpture, particularly in regard to the material of which the images of the main deities installed for worship inside the shrine were made, for even inside stone sanctuaries one often finds a stucco or wooden image installed as the *dhruva* or *mūlabēra*.

The cave-temples of the Pallavas, as also of the contemporary dynasties, are mostly models of the type called *maṇḍapas* with shrines in their hind portions or in their midst,

[1] Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, 2nd ed. (Bombay, 1956), p. 24.

sometimes lateral. The simpler excavations are merely small cells cut into the rock without a verandah or porch in front reproducing in a very simple manner the internal aspects of structural shrines. Among the whole series of Pallava cave-temples in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam there are only two such examples,[1] but there are many more examples excavated by the Pāṇḍyas in their region, by the Muttaraiyars in the Chōḷa country and other dynasties in the southern districts of coastal Āndhra (Muṇḍa-rāshṭra and Vēṅgī). But the *maṇḍapa*-type cave-temples are the most common to all these dynasties, particularly those with lateral or hind shrines, while some have the shrines designed right in their midst with the *maṇḍapa* extending over all the sides. Such *maṇḍapas* are common in the south and were built mainly of timber and brick before the sixth-seventh centuries A.D., and this continues even today in the west coast, while in other places stone has replaced brick and timber. These are found not only as adjuncts of temple-complexes as *utsava-*, *snapana-*, *nritta-* or *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapas*, where the shrines they contain are mostly open pillared pavilions, but also away from the temples. Such *maṇḍapas* are built on the pilgrims' highways, on the *ghāṭs* near rivers and tanks for the pilgrims to stay or as temporary halting places for the idols when they are taken out in processions over long distances, and, called *adhivāsam*, *pārvēṭṭai-or maṇḍagappaḍi-maṇḍapas*, acting as temples for the duration of the festival. These large pillared, open or closed, *maṇḍapas* too have invariably a small shrine inside them either at the back or at the centre with an idol of Gaṇēśa, Hanūmān or some other popular deity, so that they continue to be places of worship even when they are not the halting places of the processional images of the main temple when they come out. Such *maṇḍapas* have flat or slightly sloping roofs or terraces, according to their location in regions of low or high rainfall. Those with sloping roofs are common in parts of Tirunelvēli District adjoining the mountain *ghāṭs* and on the west coast where the precipitation is high and flat roofs would not be effective.

That these rock-cut cave-temples in the Tamil country were called *maṇḍapas* (*maṇḍakam* in Tamil)[2] would be clear from contemporary or later inscriptions and their local names as perpetuated by tradition. For example, the Tamil inscriptions in the Śittaṉṉavāśal and Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam cave-temples call them *maṇḍakam* or *kal-maṇḍakam.*[3] The monolithic cave-temple at Tirukkaḻukuṉṟam is appropriately called *Orukal-maṇḍapam* and similarly the rock-cut temples at Mahābalipuram and Śāḷuvaṇkuppam in Chingleput District and at Ariṭṭāpaṭṭi in Madurai District are even now called *maṇḍapas* or *maṇḍakams.*[4]

In spite of the new material and the difficulty in the technique of its working, the Pallavas, who specialized more on the *maṇḍapa*-type, showed distinct advances from the time of Mahēndra. They are the occasional reproduction of the overhanging flexed cornices or eaves called *kapōta* with the decorative *kūḍu*-arches, in their simpler excavations of the types as initiated by Mahēndra and in others the elaborate *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālās*—strings of small pavilions or miniature shrines of square plan with domical roofs and single finial and of oblong plans with barrel-vault roofs and many finials interconnected by a parapet-like

[1] The Trimūrti cave-temple at Mahābalipuram and the Vishṇu cave-cell at Kīḻmāvilaṅgai.

[2] Perhaps while the Sanskrit form *maṇḍapa* means an open hall, the Tamil form *maṇḍakam*, though usually supposed to be after the Sanskrit form is more probably derived from *maṉṟakam*, which again would mean an 'open hall' or *sabhā*. In Keraḷa it is denoted by the Tamil synonym *ambalam* in its Malayāḷam usage. For *adhivāsam*, see *Śilpa* works and *Epigraphia Indica*, XXXIII, no. 27, l. 6.

[3] *Muṉṉāḷ-maṇḍagam-kallāl-iyaṟṟi*—Śittaṉṉavāśal, *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1904, no. 368; 1940-41, p. 215; *Kalmaṇḍakattāḻvār*—Kurṅagaṇilmuṭṭam, *ibid.*, 1912, no. 295.

[4] E.g., Kōṭikal-maṇḍapam, Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam, Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam, Yāḷi-maṇḍapam, Iḍaichi-maṇḍapam, etc.

cloister or *hārāntara* with a coping-like vaulted roof. Such lengths of *hāras* are to be found over the façades of the more advanced types initiated by Mahēndra's son and successor Māmalla. Such a *hāra* of *kūṭas, śālās* (*kōshṭhas*) and sometimes *pañjaras* (or *nīḍas*—miniature apsidal shrines) occur over the edges of the terraces of the larger *mukha-maṇḍapas* of the structural temples of the Pallava, Chōḷa, Chāḷukya, Hoysaḷa, Vijayanagara and Nāyaka dynasties, in a word in many of the southern forms of temples.

The choice of the location of the cave-temples in the south, as in the case of the structural temples of the Pallavas, Chāḷukyas and early Chōḷas, was invariably in association with a large irrigation-tank[1] or river-bank (*tīrtha*). The Vishṇu cave-temple called Mahēndra-Vishṇu-gṛiha on the Mahēndra-taṭāka in Mahēndrapura—the temple, tank and settlement all named after Mahēndravarman I—is an ideal example. The second Māmaṇḍūr cave-temple is mentioned in its early Chōḷa inscription as Vālīśvaram standing on the Chitramēgha-taṭāka. The Pallāvaram, Śīyamaṅgalam and many other cave-temples overlook or adjoin large irrigation-tanks. In his Tiruchirāppaḷḷi inscription, Mahēndra proclaims that he excavated his cave-temple on the banks of the Kāvērī. More often the choice of the location of the later rock-cut cave-temples of Mahēndra dedicated to Śiva is a hill, which was a noted Jaina resort. The choice was apparently more prompted by intent and less by chance. This will be supported by the contemporary background of the rising creeds of the Kālāmukhas and Pāśupatas and a strong revival of Śaivism and Vaishṇavism under the early Śaiva and Vaishṇava hymnists, the Nāyaṉmārs and Āḻvārs, and the missionary zeal of their *bhakti* cult influencing the kings and the people. The Jainas, however, were sufficiently strong at this time and the Buddhists (whose influence was never so strong in the Tamil country as in Āndhra and the Deccan) were comparatively on the wane everywhere. Mahēndra excavated his Śiva cave-temple at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi on the rock immediately below a noted natural Jaina cavern; at Daḷavāṉūr with a smaller natural shelter on the top of the hill with beds of Jaina origin, and again, at Śīyamaṅgalam, which was a strong Jaina centre and the seat of a pontiff, as a tenth-century inscription there would indicate.[2] The Kuḍumiyāmalai rock-cut cave-temple on the hill with Jaina association in the form of a natural cavern and beds and the well-known rock-cut Śaiva cave-temples at Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam, Ariṭṭāpaṭṭi, Vīraśikhāmaṇi, and Kuṉṉakkuḍi and the Vishṇu cave-temple in Ānaimalai, all of Pāṇḍya origin, on hills with natural caverns, Brāhmī inscriptions and beds and Jaina sculpture are but a few of the many other examples. However, the Jaina creed seems to have been flourishing in these places in spite of such foundations of Śaiva or Vaishṇava temples, as later inscriptions testifying to their use and veneration as Jaina *tīrthas* or *kshētras* are to be found in many of them. We find the early Chōḷas who were ardent Śaivas patronizing all the creeds equally. Perhaps, while this may not reflect individual persuasions of the kings, the intention behind such a choice and the location of the cave-temples was that the places were already popular centres of pilgrimage.

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[1] Many of these large irrigation-tanks in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya countries, formed by a long bunding of sloping terrain with hills in the background, originated in the megalithic times, as funerary monuments are often found intact on the waterspreads, since the megalithic culture was a settled and advanced culture specializing in irrigated cultivation of paddy and other wet crops and characterized by ancestor-worship. The waters attained sanctity and fertility-value by their association with the remains of the dead. Very often the small structural temples standing near these irrigation-lakes are of monumental or funerary nature called *paḷḷippaḍai* in their inscriptions. This tradition of sanctity perhaps continued when the cave-temples and the structural stone temples came into being.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, no. 441.

The *maṇḍapa*-pillars of the cave-temples of Mahēndra are comparatively short, heavy and plain, without the demarcation of the various members of the order, necessitated by the novelty, hardness and unknown qualities of mass and tensile strength of the rock-material that was being adopted. In course of time, with the skill and experience derived in working the new material, the pillars were altered to finer form and proportion and with mouldings of the 'order' in the time of his son and successor Māmalla, though the smaller shrine pilasters, with mouldings of the 'order', are also found in Mahēndra's temples. The Mahēndra pillar consists of two large almost cubical parts, one at the base and the other at the top with the intervening height bevelled off at the corners to make its plan octagonal. The terminal and basal regions of square section are called the *śadurams*, while the intervening region of octagonal section is called the *kaṭṭu*. The bevelled faces of the *kaṭṭu* form sharp right angles with the projecting corners of the top and basal *śadurams*, the cut being straight, unlike the pillars of the Vijayavāḍa cave-temples and temples in the Chāḷukyan area and at least one instance of a Pāṇḍya cave-temple (Vishṇu cave-temple at Ānaimalai), where the corners of the *śadurams* are slightly drawn over the bevelled faces of the *kaṭṭu* in the form of short three-sided conical bosses or longer rounded bud-like projections.

The *pōtikā* or corbel, again, is a massive block, with arms curved or angular in profile and of size proportionate to the massiveness of the pillars. Its length from the tip of one arm to the other is usually thrice the width of the top *śaduram*, while its width is equal to that of the top *śaduram* and is cut on top of the pillars and below the principal beam or *uttira* of the same height as the corbel and of as much width.[1] The corbel with angular profile is the result of a straight bevelling of the front end of the arm of the magnitude of half a right angle. The face thus formed is plain and unornamented. The corbel with curved profile is often ornamented by a series of large roller-like mouldings, the roll-ornament being called *taraṅga*. The rolls are shown as if held together by a median band or *paṭṭa*, which is plain, occupying the middle third of the corbel-face. The rolls are often painted in different colours, while the *paṭṭa* is adorned by a carving of the meandering lotus or creeper designs (*koḍikkarukku* or *patra-latā*), or the design is often painted. While the bevelled corbel persists in later temples, particularly on the tops of *maṇḍapa*-pillars, in its primitive or evolved forms, the *taraṅga*-corbel as also corbels with curved profile disappear soon after the Pallava period. The bevelled corbels are almost the rule in the Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiyar cave-temples. The curved corbels are more characteristic of the Chāḷukyan examples and their employment in many of the Pallava cave, monolithic and structural temples and their disappearance from the south after them would indicate a transient phase. The form that prevailed in the south subsequently was the corbel with an angular profile.

Often, as in the case at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, Śīyamaṅgalam and Śiṅgavaram, the terminal *śaduram* of the pillar carries on its top a wider plank-like abacus or the *phalaka* over which the *pōtikā* is cut. A study of the proportions of such pillars in various cave-temples and a comparison of these pillars with those of full form belonging to the subsequent periods would clearly show that the top *śaduram*, often with a *phalaka* over it, is only a simplification of the usual arrangement of capital-members in the accepted 'order', from the top downwards, viz. *phalaka*, *padma*, *kumbha*, *tāḍi* and *kalaśa*,[2] while the octagonal

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[1] In the Khaṇḍagiri caves (Ananta- and Gaṇēśa-gumphās) the massive pillars of the same type do not carry corbels but have massive beams of lesser width fitted into their top *śadurams*, into oblong notches on top of the pillars, of depth equal to the height of the beam so as to make the top of the beam and the top of the pillars flush.

[2] The occurrence of all these components or at least the major ones, viz. *kalaśa*, *kumbha* and

kaṭṭu would represent the short termination of the *kāl* or shaft, its lower part being again square seated on a slightly wider square base or *ōma* at the very bottom. This is indicated by the slight taper from base to top noticed in all these pillars. In course of time, the lower *śaduram* is retained so as to form the basal half of the pillar-shaft, while the *kaṭṭu* is prolonged as the upper half with the *padma-bandha* (a broad fillet originally a strengthening metal hoop on top of wooden pillar shafts, often ornamental in stone copies), marking its termination and junction with the lowermost member of the capital, viz. the *kalaśa*. From the octagon the sixteen-sided, the thirtytwo-sided and ultimately the circular sections are only gradual steps, the basic form being the square. The *Śilpa*-texts prescribe that whatever be the form of the shaft and capital, the base of the pillar and its termination beyond the capital—the *vīrakaṇṭha*—should always be square. The *vīrakaṇṭha* represents the peg or metal rod or tenon projecting from the top of the pillar-shaft for insertion through the capital-members and corbel in order to hold them together and ultimately into the lower face of the beam. In the modification made by Māmalla and his immediate successors, the basal *śaduram* was in many cases converted into a squatting lion or *vyāla*, which in the period of Rājasiṁha was replaced by a prancing or rearing lion. This became the general rule in the columns of Māmalla and his successors up to the time of Rājasiṁha, in the type of cave-temples and *rathas* initiated by Māmalla.

Often, as prescribed in the *Śilpa*-works, the lion- or *vyāla*-bases are replaced by those of elephants, *nāgas*, *bhūtas*[1], etc., and such variants are to be seen in the Shore Temple at Mahābalipuram built by Rājasiṁha and in the Sahadēva-ratha of Māmalla. Towards the close of the Pallava rule and in subsequent periods, except in some special cases, these forms disappear giving place to the plain *śaduram* again at the base of the pillars, showing that their almost universal occurrence in the intervening period of the Pallavas was but transitory. This is confirmed by the fact that the simpler tradition of the plain lower *śaduram* continued to exist in the Mahēndra type cave-temples excavated by Māmalla and his successors including Rājasiṁha (e.g. the Kōṭikal-, Dharmarāja- and Atiraṇachaṇḍa-maṇḍapaṁs). They form again the main feature of the cave-temples of Nandivarman II and his successors right up to the close of the Pallava period, as also in the contemporary cave-temples of the Pāṇḍyas, Muttaraiyars and other dynasties. This type of pillar, with basal and terminal *śadurams*, became the main feature of the pillar of all structural stone *maṇḍapas* of the Pallava, Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya, Vijayanagara, Nāyaka and later times. The occurrence of such type of pillars in most of the cave-temples (except those of the Māmalla type) perhaps lent the traditional name *maṇḍakam* or *maṇḍapa* to these cave-temples as attested by inscriptions of the ninth-tenth century A.D. and current local names. In the Chāḷukyan series too, terminating with the Hoysaḷa examples, the peripheral pillars and pilasters of the *mahā-maṇḍapa* or *navaraṅga* conform to the pattern with *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu* and only the four central pillars surrounding the central *aṅkaṇa* have full-fledged capital-members, though with square bases.

Even in the full-formed and well-demarcated Pallava capitals of the Māmalla style it is seen that the abacus with its ventral doucine moulding, the *phalaka* and the *pāli* or *padma*

(Footnote continued)
phalaka, in diverse forms (the *kumbha* often *āmalaka*-shaped free or enclosed in a square coffer), in the earliest known pillars, as the Aśōkan columns and those in the early Buddhist caves, would mark the prevalence of a well-defined 'order' in the wooden forms even from very early times and would not therefore constitute the mere emergence of a semblance of an order as Percy Brown states (*Indian Architecture*, p. 28). They are found in their full form even in the paintings at Ajaṇṭā, where pavilions, *śālās*, storeyed buildings and other architectural forms are painted with their pillars.

[1] *Vimānārchana-kalpa* (Tirupati, 1926), p. 37.

(later *idal*) are sometimes dispensed with, the *pōtikā* being cut over a short square *vīrakantha* directly on top of the bulbous *kumbha.* The occasional absence of the abacus in such pillars is parallelled by such absence of the *phalaka* over many of the Mahēndra (or *mandapa* type) pillars.

Another very striking feature to be noted in a general survey of the Pallava cave-temples known to be dedicated to Śiva is the total absence of rock-cut *liṅgas* or their pedestals in the sanctum, while in the case of the Pāndya and Muttaraiyar cave-temples the *liṅga* with pedestal and sometimes even the Nandi in the front *mandapa* are cut out of the same rock forming an integral part of the excavation. On the other hand, in the Pallava examples one often sees a rock-cut bench or platform of greater or lesser width close to the base of the hind wall of the shrine chamber, suggesting that the appropriate deity consecrated in the shrine for worship was built above this platform against the back wall as a brick-and-stucco figure.

Tell-tale lines and remnants of paint found in some cases would strongly indicate that the forms worshipped were either painted over a thin coat of plaster or picked out in stucco, if they were not painted wooden reliefs as indicated by the shallow but plain depressions sunk into the back walls in some instances as if for the reception of such plaques. The *Āgamas* and *Śilpa*-works, while enumerating the nature and materials of the icons in worship (*mūla-bēras*), mention them as *chitra, chitrārdha* and *chitrābhāsa*[1] and as of wood, stucco and stone.[2] The south had this tradition even in the seventh century, when stone was first thought of as building material that could be also carved with bas-reliefs, and by which time stone figures or reliefs forming the principal deities of the sanctum had become common elsewhere. Perhaps the *Vichitrachitta,* while he could introduce his innovation of a stone temple for the gods, could not go against the strong conservative tradition in respect of the actual object of worship and had to continue the traditionally-accepted form, material and standards in the actual installation. That there was an unbroken tradition of the local concept of iconographic forms for about six or seven centuries prior to his times, from about the commencement of the Christian era, is evidenced by numerous references and picturesque descriptions in the literature of the local language, e.g. the Tamil *Śaṅgam* works. All the references are to painted forms on walls, plaques or stucco reliefs. The *Ahanānūru* (verse 167), for instance, describes a brick temple with the principal deity painted on the wall inside the shrine.[3] Even the figures on the memorial- or hero-stones (*nadukal*) of the earlier epoch were painted or drawn in outline. That the principal deities, Śaivite or Vaishnavite, consecrated for worship in the sanctum were paintings or painted stuccos or of brick with stucco or *kadi-śarkarā* (a special kind of lime-mortar with jaggery and other ingredients) on the rear walls or wooden reliefs set on the platform against the back wall is evidenced by independent references to such worship in contemporary Tamil and Sanskrit literature. Poygai Ālvār, a native of Kāñchī and one of the early Vaishnava saints of this period, states in one context

[1] Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography,* I, pt. i, Introduction, p. 18.

[2] The tradition has been so strong that there are still wooden or stucco *mūlabēras* in some of the famous temples of the south as in the Vishnu temple at Tirukkōvilūr, also at Puri, where the deity is of *dāru* or wood; in the Ulakalanda Perumāl (Trivikrama) temple of Kāñchī, Ādi-varāha temple of Mahābalipuram, the Raṅganātha temple at Śrīraṅgam and the Anantaśayanam temple at Trivandrum they are of brick and mortar (*kadiśarkarā*). Even if the icon was of stone, it was covered by stucco and painted and in many old temples, as for example in the Malayadippatti Vishnu cave-temple and in the Pirānmalai Śiva cave-temple, the old painted stucco over the stone relief is still extant. See also Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.,* pp. 49 and 52.

[3] *Ittikai-nedun-cuvar-vittam-vīlndena mani-p-purā-t-turanda marañ-cōr mādattu eludani-kadavul;* also *v. 369.*

that the various people, according to their respective creeds or knowledge, are wont to worship different forms of god-head, declaring them to be their own personal gods by depicting them on the walls or installing their known forms against the walls, though the form of the Lord who measured the earth (*Trivikrama*) is the supreme.[1] The *Avanti-sundarī-kathā-sāra*[2] narrates how the queen of Rājahaṁsa offered worship to Guha in the *guhālaya* (cave-temple) and saw the wall picture (*bhitti-chitra*) of Guha playing beside his parents and a son was born to her by the grace of the god. Thus, while the forms of Vishṇu or Śiva could have been painted or picked out in stucco on the walls of the earlier cave-temples, it is only in the cave-temples or *rathas* completed, excavated or carved by Paramēśvaravarman or his son Rājasiṁha (who in his Kāñchī inscription likens himself to Guha, as born to Paramēśvara and his consort) that we find the first stone bas-reliefs of Somāskanda on the back wall of every Śiva shrine, occupying the most prominent place and arresting position. The *liṅga* with or without *āvuḍaiyār*, installed perhaps as a subsequent addition in earlier cave-temples and as a contemporary subsidiary in later temples, is always of a special type of stone—black stone, polished charnockite or basalt.[3]

Another noteworthy feature is the absence of any original water-outlet from the sanctum. The gargoyle-like water-spout, the *praṇāla*, usually built projecting out on the northern side of the *vimānas*, is absent even in the monolithic and structural temples of the Pallavas. It is obvious that the painted forms on the back walls could not be bathed ceremonially (*abhishēka*).[4] However, from the numerous references in the hymns of the contemporary saints, to *abhishēka* with such materials as milk, honey, fruit-juice, ghee curd, coconut-water and sugarcane-juice, besides water and other aromatics,one has to infer that there were separate *snapana-bēras* that were so bathed[5] and the *abhishēka*-water was received in vessels inside the sanctum itself. It is interesting to note that in the cave temples of the Pāṇḍyas and Muttaraiyars, containing rock-cut *liṅgas*, there is always a cistern cut into the floor of the sanctum below the spout of the *āvuḍaiyār* to receive the *abhishēka*-water, though there are no *ambu-mārgas* or water-courses or *praṇālas* or water-chutes for the water to flow out.

While there are bas-relief sculptures of deities and even group-compositions of synoptic or narrative nature depicting Purāṇic episodes adorning the walls of the *maṇḍapas*,

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[1] *Avar-avar-tām-tām-aṟindavāṟu-ētti ivar-ivar-emberumāṉ-eṉṟu śuvarmiśai-ch-chārttiyum-vaittuṁ-toḻuvār ulaku-aḷanda mūrti-uruve-mudal* (*Nālāyira-divya-prabandham*, 2095; Poygai, *Iyaṟpā*, I, v. 14).

[2] *Rājñī punas=tapasvinyā upalabhya guhālayam, anapatyajanārādhyaṁ pratasthē tanayāsthayā: Bhitti-chitragataṁ pitrōḥkrīḍantaṁ Guham=antikāt, dṛishṭvā svatanayāvasthāsmaraṇēna rurōda sā. Avanti-sundarī-kathā-sara*, ed. Harihara Sastri (Mylapore, 1957) III, vv. 37-38.

[3] In the context of the *Tēvāram* hymns of the contemporary Śaiva saints, there is very meagre reference to the *liṅga* and that too to the one made by Chaṇḍēśa by heaping up sand—Tiruñāṇa Sambandar—*Tēvāram*, I, 670; II, 1932, Sundaramūrti—*Tēvāram*, VII, 7382; and a reference to the four faces of Śiva often interpreted as a *chaturmukha-liṅga*, Appar (Tirunāvukkaraśar)—*Tēvāram*, IV, 4338. In other places in the same collection of *Tēvāram* hymns, the references are to *tāparam* (*sthāvaram*), which means both a shrine and a fixed symbol even as the term *liṅga* does, to *tāṇu* (*sthāṇu*), and to *taḻaṟpilambu* (stele of fire)—*Tēvāram*; Sambandar, I,138, 675; Appar, IV, 4627; 4636; VI, 6577, 6584. *Puṟṟiḍamkoṇḍār* (anthill) or *kamba* (pillar or stele or *pṛithvī-liṅga*) are the other names met with. In one context Śiva is described as a stele of fire from which emerged His form, when Vishṇu and Brahmā were seeking its base and top—*Tēvāram*—Sambandar, I, 138. The *liṅga* of the main Ēkāmrēśvara temple of the Pallava capital Kāñchī was from the earliest times a *pṛithvīliṅga*. Thus, there seems to be no clear reference to a stone *liṅga* in the contemporary hymns of the *Tēvāram* at least in those of the two earlier saints who are believed to have lived in the time of Mahēndra or his successors. See K. R. Srinivasan, *Journal of the Madras University*, XXXII, pp. 131-198.

[4] Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

[5] Tiruñāna-Sambandar—*Tēvāram*, I, 660; II, 1528; III, 2801.

the flanks of the façade and shrine-entrance or on free rock-faces as the Arjuna's Penance and Gōvardhana scenes at Mahābalipuram, they are strikingly absent in the sanctums of earlier cave-temples except perhaps the upper cave-temple at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, where they are supposed to be implied by inscriptions but are not extant now. In the later cave-temples of both Mahēndra and Māmalla styles, and two of the *rathas*,[1] however, there are bas-reliefs of the Sōmāskanda group on the back walls of the sanctum of the Śiva cave-temples or the appropriate form of Vishṇu or Durgā or some other deity in the Vaishṇavite and other cave-temples. These appear to have been introduced from the time of Paramēśvaravarman.

The Pallava *dvāra-pālas* found in all the cave-temples are all two-armed, both facing front or one of the pair shown in profile. Soon the Pallava sculptor was impressed by the greater effect of profile studies and employed them to a larger extent. Often one of the two *dvāra-pālas* in a Śiva temple has a pair of curved horns on the head shown laterally on either side of the crown or behind it and only one of a pair has the horns, while the other is without them. Many interpretations have been given and some have characterized them specially as Pallava. But the provenance of this horned form of *dvāra-pāla* in examples outside the Pallava area and in cave and other temples not of Pallava origin, as for instance, the Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiyar cave-temples and some of the Chāḷukyan and Rāshṭrakūṭa temples and again in cave-temples at Bhairavakoṇḍa, would give the lie direct to this assumption. These horned *dvāra-pālas* may represent Nandi.[2] The *dvāra-pālas* of Śiva shrines often rest on clubs. The horned *dvāra-pāla* seems to have been associated only with the particular forms of Śiva enshrined in the sanctum. The Durgā shrines have *dvāra-pālikās*. The *dvāra-pālas* of Vishṇu shrines are without clubs.

The other decorative feature is the *kūḍu*, a replica in part of the *alpa-nāsikā* of the *Śilpa*-texts adorning the faces of the flexed cornice or *kapōta*. In the Mahēndra type caves excavated throughout the Pallava period the *kapōta* is hardly more than a rough-cut cornice or eaves formed by the projecting rock-ledge over the façade. Very rarely, as in the Pallāvaram cave-temple, it is finished into a smooth flexed moulding in a straight line and decorated by the *kūḍu*-arches in addition, as at Daḷavāṇūr. These *kūḍu*-arches are essentially made up of two small *tōraṇas* or foliar arches, meeting on top below a flat finial. However, the *kūḍu*-arches are more often found on the well-formed *kapōta* over the entrance of the shrine-cells inside the *maṇḍapa* as also on the exterier façades of the Māmalla style cave-temples and the *rathas*.

The *makara-tōraṇa* ornament spanning entrances or over sculpture niches is a rare feature in the Mahēndra caves and is found only in two instances, at Daḷavānūr and Śīyamaṅgalam.

In order to ascertain the main characteristics of the cave-temples of the Pallavas, it will be necessary to make a comparative study of the earliest of these cave-temples, i.e. those excavated by Mahēndravarman I and authenticated beyond any doubt by his own inscriptions on them and similar cave-temples without his inscriptions. This will enable the chronological arrangement of the cave-temples of Mahēndra as determined by the variation of features and motifs among the group and form the basis for the assignment of proper places in the chronological order for the other cave-temples, taking also into consideration the epigraphical evidence wherever available.

[1] Sōmāskanda in the cells of Mahishamardinī cave, Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam, Dharmarāja-ratha and Atiraṇachaṇḍa-maṇḍapam, Durgā in the Draupadī-ratha and Śiva, Vishṇu and Brahmaśāstā in the Trimūrti cave-temple.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1921-22, pt. i, pp. 3 and 4. The identification of the horned *dvāra-pāla* with Nandi (who is also known as *Śṛiṅgi*) seems to be acceptable.

CHAPTER IV

THE STYLES OF MAHĒNDRA AND MĀMALLA

1. THE MAHĒNDRA STYLE

THERE ARE AT LEAST EIGHT EXCAVATIONS DEFINITELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO MAHĒNDRAVARMAN I as revealed by the contemporary inscriptions in them recording the fact of their creation by the king or their being named after one of his numerous *birudas* (titles) or by the presence in them of a few or many of his *birudas*.[1] They are: the rock-cut cave-temples at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and Pallāvaram; the larger cave-temple, second from the north, at Māmaṇḍūr, designated Māmaṇḍūr II, though without any inscription of Mahēndra but belonging on stylistic grounds to his period; the cave-temple at Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam nearby; the larger cave-temple at Vallam, designated Vallam I; the cave-temple at Mahēndravāḍi; the nothernmost smaller cave in Māmaṇḍūr, designated Māmaṇḍūr I; the upper cave at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi; and the cave-temples in Śīyamaṅgalam and Daḷavāṇūr. They are classified in order of their development as revealed by architectural and decorative features.

Among these, the cave-temple at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu must be considered to be the earliest attempted and first finished excavation, for it is here that Mahēndra says that he created a temple, an object of wonder, for the Trinity (*trimūrti*) without the use of brick, timber, metal or mortar. He perhaps chose this spot in an area surrounded by numerous scattered rocks or boulders in a hilly district, far from his capital, since it was to be his first attempt and an experiment. Barring his cave-temple at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi in the traditional Chōḷa country, this was the farthest of his excavations away from his capital in his own home-country of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. The rest were nearer home, the nearest ones being at Māmaṇḍūr and Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam within eight miles of Kāñchī, while Pallāvaram and Vallam lay on the road from Kāñchī to the ports of Mallai (Mahābalipuram) and Mayilai (Mylapore); Śīyamaṅgalam and Mahēndravāḍi were on the western roads leading to the Chāḷukyan and Gaṅga territories. The cave-temple at Pallāvaram and the larger one at Māmaṇḍūr (Māmaṇḍūr II), as also the one at Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam, perhaps followed soon after Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, judging from their similarity to Maṇḍagappaṭṭu in having three (or more) shrine-cells, the lack of ornamentation of the pillars with lotus-medallions and the absence of *taraṅga*-corbels and sculpture. The upper cave-temple at Vallam (Vallam I), with a single shrine-cell dedicated to Śiva and resembling the above in the lack of ornamentation, appears to have come next. The Mahēndravāḍi cave-temple (the only example definitely known to be dedicated to Vishṇu) and the first (the northernmost) of the cave-temples at Māmaṇḍūr (Māmaṇḍūr I), perhaps also dedicated to Vishṇu, would form the next group. These two are similar on plan, have lotus-medallions on the pillars and have curved corbels without *taraṅga*. They have also no mouldings over the

[1] The only exception would be the Vallam I cave-temple which was excavated by the son of Mahēndra's vassal and named after his father. However, the inscription mentions Mahēndra's name and titles.

kapōta simulating the timberwork of the terrace (as in Pallāvaram) and lack sculptures. The cave-temple at Daḷavāṉūr, the upper rock-cut cave at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and the cave-temple at Sīyamaṅgalam were perhaps the last to be completed in Mahēndra's time, as indicated by their greater elaboration in ornamentation and sculpture. The Tiruchirāppaḷḷi cave-temple, with a single shrine-cell dedicated to Śiva, resembles all the earlier cave-temples in having no ornate *kapōta,* and those at Mahēndravāḍi and Māmaṇḍūr (smaller cave-temple, Māmaṇḍūr I) in having the lotus-medallions on its pillars. Besides the lotus-medallions, it has a variety of other types of medallions on the upper parts of its pillars, which, along with the *taraṅga*-corbels and a large bas-relief group sculpture of Gaṅgādhara are its most distinguishing features. The Daḷavāṉūr temple, on the other hand, has the lotus-medallions on the pillars of the façade but does not have *taraṅga* on its corbels. The presence of a well-formed *kapōta* with *kūḍus* on its façade (a unique feature not found in the other Mahēndra style cave-temples), a fine *makara-tōraṇa* spanning the entrance between the two main pillars of the façade and the presence of a monolithic pillared porch cut out of the rock in front of the shrine inside the large *maṇḍapa* are its most significant anticipatory features. But it lacks sculpture of any importance, as compared with Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and Sīyamaṅgalam. The unique features of the Sīyamaṅgalam cave-temple would include the pillars of the façade with lotus-medallions at their bases, fine panel-sculptures and floral medallions on the top portions of the pillars, *taraṅga*-corbels and the fine sculptures inside the two niches flanking the façade with fully-formed pilasters having capitals and carrying *makara-tōraṇas.*

In general, therefore, the most characteristic features of the cave-temples excavated by Mahēndra are the simplicity of their plan and decoration, paucity of sculpture in them and the size and shape of their main pillars. On plan, they consist of a large *maṇḍapa* with one or more smaller square shrine-cells Often, in addition to the row of pillars and pilasters on the façade, there is a second parallel row inside the *maṇḍapa,* thus dividing it into *ardha-* and *mukha-maṇḍapas.* In the absence of the dividing row of pillars this demarcation is often indicated by the difference in the floor-level of the two sections. The equidistant pillars (fig. 3) are divided into square sections on top and base with an octagonal section in between. The pilasters in the earlier examples are not so shaped but are uniformly tetragonal from base to top, while in a few of the latest examples in the series they often come to resemble the pillars in design.

Another feature that marks the pillars as relatively early and late are the large lotus-like medallions decorating their cubical parts, not found in the earlier examples. The corbels on their top are simple, heavy blocks with a terminal chamfer resulting in an angular profile or with a graded and smooth cut, giving a curved profile, the curve, like the angle varying from less obtuse to more obtuse. In the later examples of Mahēndra, the curved corbel-arms are decorated by a series of heavy roll-mouldings—the *taraṅga,* with a median flat band, *paṭṭa,* connecting them up as if binding them together. Often interposed between the top of the pillar and base of the corbel is a thin plank moulding—the *phalaka,* suggesting that the squared top of the pillars represents the usual capital components simplified. The cornice in almost all the examples is the rough projecting ledge of the rock with irregular outline, but with the undersurface dressed. Only in a few cases, as at Pallāvaram and Daḷavāṉūr, it is moulded into a flexed *kapōta* and in the latter example decorated by *kūḍu*-arches in addition. In both the cases the mouldings of the terrace-work showing the ends of joists are carved over the projecting *kapōta.*

The façades of the cave-temples face east, west, north or south. The shrine-cell or -cells are cut behind the *maṇḍapa* in east- and west-facing examples, while they are cut into one of the side-walls, to face east or west, in cases where the *maṇḍapa*-façade faces south or north

as dictated by the orientation of the rock and the part of the rock chosen on account of suitability. Pallāvaram is the only example where the *maṇḍapas* as well as the shrine-cells behind all face south. The shrine-cells are cut at a level higher than the floor of the *maṇḍapa* in front with a flight of rock-cut steps (*sōpāna*). These cell-openings are often flush with the hind wall of the *maṇḍapa* or are cut into projected shrine-fronts with *adhishṭhāna*, pilaster and *kapōta*-mouldings partially anticipating the monolithic *rathas* in elevation. The pilasters of these shrine-fronts in the later examples of the Mahēndra series have all the components of the capital, while in the earlier examples they are simple flat and plain reliefs. In the Daḷavāṉūr cave there is a monolithic pillared porch, in front of the shrine and inside the large *maṇḍapa*, a rare occurrence among Pallava cave-temples, which is found again only in the Mahishamardinī cave of the Māmalla style at Mahābalipuram.

The shrine-cells do not contain any bas-relief sculpture of the principal deity on the back wall or on the centre of its floor, not even rock-cut *liṅgas* in the case of Śiva temples. But often there is a wide or narrow rock-cut platform at the base of the hind wall of the sanctum. While the floors of the shrines of some of the Śiva cave-temples is cut even, there are socket-holes very often irregular, cut at the centre, sometimes in addition to the rock-platform behind. Installed *liṅgas* in black polished stone of uncertain date are often found inserted in these sockets, sometimes, with *āvuḍaiyārs* of the same material. The only sculptures in most of them are the *dvāra-pālas* flanking the *maṇḍapa*-façade as at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and Daḷavāṉūr, or the shrine-entrance alone as in many of the other cases or both as at Daḷavāṉūr; they are totally absent in the case of the Pallāvaram cave-temple and the smaller Māmaṇḍūr cave-temple (Māmaṇḍūr I). The *dvāra-pālas* are two-armed and almost face front with or without clubs. One of each pair in some Śiva cave-temples has two curved horns projecting from behind the head-dress. In the latest of the series in addition to *dvāra-pālas*, there are other sculptures on the lateral walls of the *maṇḍapa* as in the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi upper cave or on the façade-pillars and its flanks as in Sīyamaṅgalam. The *makara-* and *stambha-tōraṇas* are found only in two of the latest examples, viz. Daḷavāṉūr and Sīyamaṅgalam.

There are many other cave-temples of this type without inscriptions of Mahēndra, some of them, however, with inscriptions of later Pallava monarchs relating to their foundation or indicating it otherwise. This would denote that this type of cave-temple continued to be excavated by the Pallava kings for two more centuries till the close of their rule. Such cave-temples conforming to the type but showing slight advances in the matter of sculptural contents or other embellishments have to be classified along with the Mahēndra cave-temples and considered in their chronological sequence as would be indicated by their inscriptions, sculpture and or other additional architectural details.

Mahēndra's successor Māmalla (Narasiṁhavarman I), being an equally great king and art-lover, in addition to excavating a few cave-temples of the Mahēndra type, started a new style of cave-temples, besides carving out rocks into monolithic *vimānas* or *rathas*, as they are better known. This type of cave-temples and *rathas* initiated by Māmalla was continued by two generations of rulers, who also excavated simultaneously the Mahēndra type cave-temples, even as Māmalla did. Thus, while there is an unbroken continuity of the earlier type of cave-temples from Mahēndravarman I to about the end of the Pallava period, the Māmalla type cave-temples and *rathas* ceased to be excavated or carved by the end of the reign of Paramēśvaravarman I, who, and after whom Rajasiṁha, concentrated on the construction of structural temples.

Though these later kings made innovations of their own, their adherence to the traditional type initiated by Mahēndra, who first wrought in the hard stone of south India,

was perhaps the result of *sampradāya.* Not only the successors of Mahēndra, but the contemporary Pāṇḍyas, the Muttaraiyars, the Adigaimāṉs and rulers of other dynasties have faithfully respected the *sampradāya* and have followed the type and style initiated by Mahēndra in their cave-temples with certain modifications. All these cave-temples (with perhaps a few exceptions like the Vishṇu cave temple at Malaiyaḍippaṭṭi and the Śiva cave-temple at Kuḍumiyāmalai) are copies of the Mahēndra pattern in plan as well as in essential details. While the Pāṇḍyas and Muttaraiyars continued to excavate cave-temples in the south, the number of excavations in the late Pallava period diminished in their home country owing to the fact that after Rājasiṁha, his successors concentrated more on structural stone temples in preference to cave-temples.

In the period immediately following Mahēndra, an almost equal number of cave-temples after his model was excavated in Toṇḍai maṇḍalam in the times of Māmalla, Paramēśvaravarman and Rājasiṁha, some of them containing inscriptions of this period and of the kings referred to.

But cave-temples with foundation-inscriptions of the later Pallavas–Nandivarman II, Dantivarman, Nandivarman III and Nṛipatuṅga—are not found in Toṇḍai maṇḍalam, though there are five with their earliest inscriptions dated in the reigns of these Pallava kings in the Chōḷa country under the occupation of the Muttaraiyars, who were often independent of the Pallavas and dated inscriptions in their own regnal years without reference to the ruling Pallava monarchs or their regnal years. The Muttaraiyars, like the Pallavas, also excavated a large number of cave-temples in their area with many local characteristics. The Pāṇḍyas too excavated some in this area during the periods of their extended power over this region. The five cave-temples in the Chōḷa country were not excavations by the Pallava kings mentioned in their inscriptions, but by the Muttaraiyars and resemble other independent Muttaraiyar cave-temples in this area without Pallava inscriptions. As such, they are best considered along with the Muttaraiyar cave-temples of the Chōḷa country. But three small excavations (Kīḷmāvilaṅgai, Vallam II and III) in the Pallava country (Toṇḍai maṇḍalam), without inscriptions but having late features, would perhaps belong to this period.

The cave-temples with the inscriptions of the other Pallava kings, which can, therefore, be dated will come after those of Mahēndra in their chronological order and would incidentally indicate through their variations in features or motifs the lines of their development from the Mahēndravarman cave-temple. This would enable the assignment of the rest of the cave-temples of the same general style, but without inscriptions, to their respective places in the above scheme by comparison of their features with those of the datable examples.

Thus, on the basis indicated above, the rock-cut cave-temples of the Pallavas in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam would fall under two styles: the Mahēndra style and the Māmalla style cave-temples.

Since the Mahēndra style cave-temples continued to be excavated after Mahēndra I, till practically the close of the Pallava rule, it will fall under three periods, as explained below.

The first period will include all the authentic cave-temples of Mahēndra and those that can be assigned to his times on stylistic and other considerations. They are the cave-temples at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and Pallāvaram, Māmaṇḍūr II (the second cave-temple from the north), the cave-temple at Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam, the upper cave at Vallam, the cave-temple at Mahēndravāḍi, Māmaṇḍūr I (the first cave-temple from the north), the caves temple at Daḷavāṉūr, the upper rock-cut cave at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and the cave-temples at Viḷāppākkam and Śīyamaṅgalam.

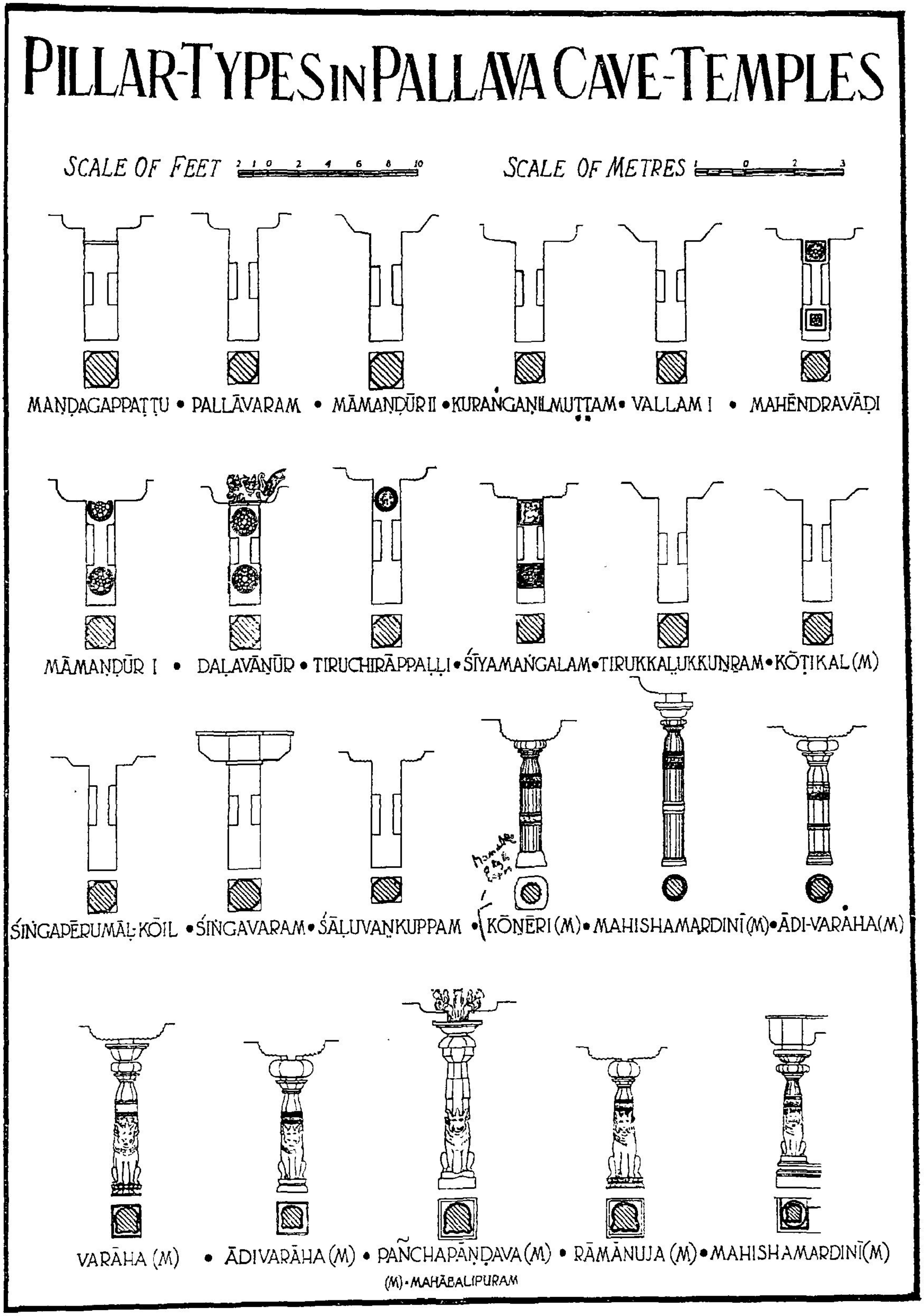
PILLAR-TYPES IN PALLAVA CAVE-TEMPLES
SCALE OF FEET 2 1 0 2 4 6 8 10
SCALE OF METRES 1 0 2 3
MAṆḌAGAPPAṬṬU • PALLĀVARAM • MĀMAṆḌŪR II • KURANGAṆILMUṬṬAM • VALLAM I • MAHĒNDRAVĀḌI
MĀMAṆḌŪR I • DAḶAVĀNŪR • TIRUCHIRĀPPAḶḶI • ŚĪYAMANGALAM • TIRUKKALUKKUṆṞAM • KŌṬIKAL (M)
ŚINGAPĒRUMĀḶ-KŌIL • ŚINGAVARAM • ŚĀḶUVANKUPPAM • KŌNĒRI (M) • MAHISHAMARDINĪ (M) • ĀDI-VARĀHA (M)
VARĀHA (M) • ĀDIVARĀHA (M) • PAÑCHAPĀṆḌAVA (M) • RĀMĀNUJA (M) • MAHISHAMARDINĪ (M)
(M) • MAHĀBALIPURAM

FIG. 3

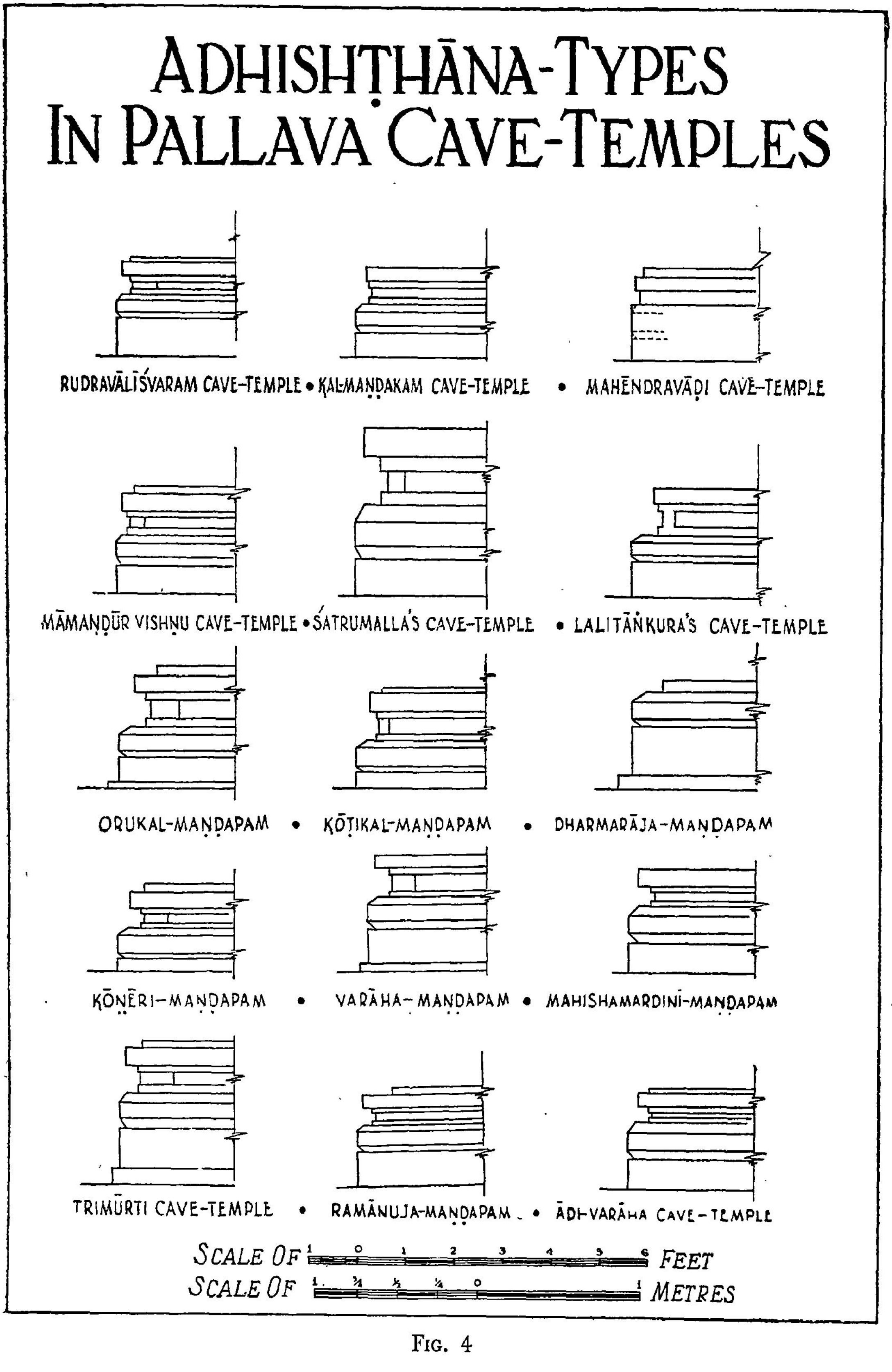
ADHISHṬHĀNA-TYPES IN PALLAVA CAVE-TEMPLES
RUDRAVĀLĪŚVARAM CAVE-TEMPLE • KAL-MAṆḌAKAM CAVE-TEMPLE • MAHĒNDRAVĀḌI CAVE-TEMPLE
MĀMAṆḌŪR VISHṆU CAVE-TEMPLE • ŚATRUMALLA'S CAVE-TEMPLE • LALITĀṄKURA'S CAVE-TEMPLE
ORUKAL-MAṆḌAPAM • KŌṬIKAL-MAṆḌAPAM • DHARMARĀJA-MAṆḌAPAM
KŌṆĒRI-MAṆḌAPAM • VARĀHA-MAṆḌAPAM • MAHISHAMARDINĪ-MAṆḌAPAM
TRIMŪRTI CAVE-TEMPLE • RAMĀNUJA-MAṆḌAPAM • ĀDI-VARĀHA CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 FEET
SCALE OF 1 ¾ ½ ¼ 0 1 METRES

FIG. 4

The second period would include the cave-temples of the above model assignable to the reigns of Māmalla, Mahēndra II, Paramēśvaravarman I and Rājasiṁha, i.e. up to the dynastic revolution. They are the Orukal-maṇḍapam cave-temple at Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam, the Kōṭikal-maṇḍapam in Mahābalipuram, the cave-temples of Śiṅgaperumāḷ-kōil, Śiṅgavaram and Mēlachēri, the fourth and third cave-temples at Māmaṇḍūr, the Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam at Mahābalipuram and the Atiraṇachaṇḍa-maṇḍapam at Śāḷuvaṅkuppam.

To the third period are to be assigned the later and smaller excavations in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam where not many cave-temples seem to have been excavated in view of the increased activity in structural stonework. The cave-cell at Kīḻmāvilaṅgai and the lower cave-temple and the northern cave-temple on the Vallam hill are to be included in this period.

2. THE MĀMALLA STYLE

The style of cave-temples initiated by Narasiṁhavarman I Māmalla (Mahāmalla) was independent of the Mahēndra type, and, though it persisted only for two generations after him, marks some great advances with new features in cave-architecture. The most outstanding advance noted is a fuller representation of the *maṇḍapa* in its frontal and interior aspects, making the stone-copies more true to their contemporary structural originals. In the *maṇḍapa*-types of cave-temples originated by Mahēndra, the reproduction of the front elevation ended with the cornice or *kapōta* of the *prastara*, occasionally showing above the *kapōta* mouldings and lines simulating the timberwork and terracing as at Pallāvaram and Daḷavāṉūr suggesting that it was only a flat terraced roof without parapets after similar originals. In the Māmalla type, the *hāra* with cloister-like *hārāntara* connecting a series of *śālās* (miniature wagon-top oblong shrines) forming a sort of enclosure or parapet over the edges of the flat roof of the *maṇḍapa* is faithfully reproduced. This suggests a copy of a type with a central open court over the roof (*chandra-śālā*) or a hall (*harmya*) surrounded by a series of pavilions (*śālās* and *kūṭas*) connected together by a cloister-walk running peripherally. Such types are suggested by the description in earlier Tamil literature of the area as *aramiyam* (*harmya*). In contrast with the massiveness and often square nature of the Mahēndra pillars, which seem to have been introduced by him more out of necessity than of choice, and which in later examples of the second and third periods of the style gradually thinned and grew taller, the pillars of the Māmalla style (fig. 3) assume elegant and proportionate forms. In place of the simple, essentially four-sided and often unornamented pillars of the *maṇḍapa*-type without the differentiation of the members of the 'capital' (the capital being represented by the top *śaduram* occasionally with a *phalaka* or abacus and rudimentary *padma* below it, and the only ornament if any being the large lotus or floral medallions or, occasionally, bas-reliefs adorning the square faces of the *śaduram*), Māmalla introduced pillars with taller and quite slender shafts with capitals. They conformed perhaps to the same proportions as contemporary carved wooden pillars with all the members of the 'order' reproduced, viz. the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, *kumbha*, *padma* or *pāli*, and *phalaka*. Such a differentiation of the capital in the examples of the Mahēndra series is to be noticed only in the ornamental pilasters—*kudyastambhas* adorning the shrine-walls or flanking shrine-entrances inside the *maṇḍapa*, or *tōraṇa-stambhas* flanking sculpture niches and carrying *tōraṇas* on top; even these are few and far between in the whole range of Mahēndra type of cave-temples. In the Māmalla style, however, the functional columns of the façade and *maṇḍapa* are pillars with capitals of the 'order'. The shafts are essentially circular and are faceted with sixteen sides, while the corresponding pilasters have four-sided shafts. They are further embellished by decorative motifs, such as the

madhya-bandha, *padma-bandha* and often by *patra-latā* or *koḍikkarukku* on the corners of the capital-members. The *pōtikās*, not so large, are quite proportionate and the corbel-arms have a curved profile often with the *taraṅga* or roll-ornament with a median band or *paṭṭa*. The bases of the pillars (fig. 3) are frequently shaped into forms of squatting lions or *vyālas*, a characteristic of the Māmalla pillars extending up to the time of Paramēśvara I. In the Yāḷimaṇḍapam at Śāḷuvaṅkuppam is depicted the rearing form of lion at the pillar-base as in the structural temples of Rājasiṁha Pallava. Since simultaneously monolithic *vimānas* were also being carved out of boulders presenting all the three dimensions of the *vimānas* with all their details, in at least one example of the Māmalla style cave-temple—the Trimūrti cave at Mahābalipuram—the elevation of a string of three juxtaposed shrines could be presented even as the elevation of the *maṇḍapa*—front in the other examples of this series. In this case the reproduction of the *hāra* over the *prastara*, with *karṇa-kūṭas* (miniature square shrines at the corners of the *vimāna*) and *bhadra-śālās* (oblong wagon-topped miniature shrines on the centre of each side of the *vimāna* storey) in between is remarkable.

The *kūḍus*, which are essentially *alpa-nāsikās* without the supporting pilasters, form the characteristic embellishment of the *kapōta* as also the *kōṇa-paṭṭas* (or the decoratively embossed metal plates bracing the ribs or corners of the wooden or metal cornices, or the segments of the *śikhara*-roof at their junctions or ribs). The *haṁsa*- or *bhūta*-frieze of the *valabhī*-course (the *haṁsas* or *gaṇas* marking the decorated ends of the joists projected over the beam and protected by the flexed *kapōta* or eaves in wooden originals) and the *vyāla*-frieze (marking the ends of the joists of the terracing or roof over the *kapōta*), not found in the Mahēndra cave-temples, appear here as they do in the monolithic *rathas*.

The ten examples of this style, including three half-finished or unfinished ones, all confined to Mahābalipuram, represent the different plans and designs already met with in the simpler cave-temples of the Mahēndra style. These include *maṇḍapas* divided or undivided into frontal and distal halves (*mukha*- and *ardha-maṇḍapas*) by an inner row of pillars parallel to the façade, with one or more shrine-cells behind. These shrine-cells are projected more or less into the *maṇḍapa*, and in one unfinished example—the Pañcha-pāṇḍava-maṇḍapam next to Arjuna's Penance—the plan to cut round, with the shrine at the centre and a pillared *maṇḍapa* round it on all sides, is quite evident. In another case—Yamapuri or Mahishamardinī cave—the shrine has a monolithic pillared porch in front standing inside the *maṇḍapa* as in Mahēndra's cave-temple at Daḷavāṇūr. The shrine-fronts here, as in the case of Mahēndra type cave-temples, end on top with the *kapōta* of the *prastara* which reaches the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa*. They do not carry the *hāra* or string of miniature shrines (*kūṭas* and *śālās*) with interconnecting cloister or parapet, as is often found over the shrine-fronts in the Chāḷukya and Rāshṭrakūṭa cave-temples or over the shrine door-frames of their structural temples. Thus, while these cave-temples represent types with different plans which had already become common in the Mahēndra temples, it is very difficult to trace any gradual development within the small group, especially when the different types occur in the same place and appear to be almost contemporaneous. These seven finished cave-temples would broadly fall into two classes, viz. four without inscriptions and three with inscriptions. Of the three cave-temples with inscriptions, two have almost identical inscriptions, which are also found on a monolithic *ratha* (Gaṇeśa-ratha) and a Mahēndra type cave-temple (Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam), and are ascribable to Paramēśvaravarman I. Among the other four, of which one is a unique type altogether, a relative sequence can more or less be made out.

What appear to be earlier examples of the Māmalla style are devoid of sculptural (bas-relief) representations of the principal deities inside the shrines, as in the early

Mahēndra cave-temples while the later examples have them. The sculptures of the principal deities are in *sama-bhaṅga* when standing, an erect posture imparting a certain amount of stiffness to the otherwise fine sculpture (as Durgā in the shrine-cell of the Draupadī-ratha). The same erect attitude is also to be found in the case of seated sculptures of the principal deities. But the other sculptures in the *maṇḍapa* and shrine-walls, including the *dvāra-pālas* depict more easy and graceful poses, which go very well with the fineness of sculpture and their beautiful proportions and slimness of outline, all characteristics of Pallava sculpture. These lyrical or *vaiṇika* forms are common both to masculine and feminine sculpture. There are also some excellent animal studies, particularly the elephant and the bull, though the lions, often in their conventionalized *vyāla*-forms, are much below the standard attained in the depiction of other animal-forms. The profiles become more frequent, the artistic effect of which has been well exploited by the Pallava sculptor. Large group-sculptures, synoptic and narrative occupying entire spaces of walls, such as the Mahishamardinī and Anantaśāyi panels in the Mahishamardinī cave-temple, Ādi-Varāha, Trivikrama, Gaja-Lakshmī and Durgā panels in the Varāha-maṇḍapam and Gaja-Lakshmī, Durgā and other panels in the Ādi-Varāha cave-temple, or on rock-faces as the Arjuna's Penance and Gōvardhana scenes, form the masterpieces of this period.

Examples of this style are not found outside Mahābalipuram, where, along with almost finished specimens, there are a few unfinished ones, which are still interesting from the point of view of the plan or the completed features.

The excavation of the cave-temples of this series was commenced and variously completed in the period between the latter half of Māmalla's reign and the end of Paramēśvara's reign and hence it is difficult to date them individually during this short period. However, taking the characteristics enumerated above into consideration and in comparison with the essentials of the contemporary Mahēndra type cave-temples, particularly the sculptures and inscriptions wherever they are found, the following sequence can be approximately made out.

The Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam (or the five-celled rock-cut cave-temple as it is generally called) in its combined features of both Mahēndra and Māmalla styles would apparently mark the beginning of the series.

The Mahishamardinī cave-temple, though bearing a sculpture of the principal deity, Sōmāskanda which indicates its completion by Paramēśvara, would architecturally come next. This has the simple type of pillars with capitals but without lion- or *vyāla*-bases resembling in this respect the inner row of pillars in the Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam. The pillars of its inner porch, in having lion- or *vyāla*-bases, herald their advent as a characteristic of Māmalla style. These form the façade-pillars of the Varāha-maṇḍapam which would therefore come next in the order. The Varāha-maṇḍapam was completed, without the sculpture of a deity inside the sanctum, perhaps even in Māmalla's time or immediately after, but earlier than the Mahishamardinī cave, the last stages of the excavation of which are still incomplete, even after being extended to the time of Paramēśvara.

The Ādi-Varāha cave-temple, with its outer row of *vyāla*-pillars and absence of sculpture on its sanctum-wall, would mark its completion in the earlier part of Paramēśvara's reign, as evidenced by the inscriptions. The other internal evidences in this cave-temple would indicate its commencement late in the reign of Māmalla, its continuation through the very short period of his successor as further proved by their portrait-sculptures inside and its final completion by Paramēśvaravarman.

The Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam, with lion- or *vyāla*-pillars on its façade and bas-relief Sōmāskanda in the sanctum and Paramēśvara's inscription, would entirely belong to the time of Paramēśvara. The Trimūrti cave-temple which, unlike the *maṇḍapa*-types above,

depicts the front elevations of *vimānas* and contains sculptures inside the shrine-cells, is to be attributed to Paramēśvara. This example is also unique in that it shows the *kūṭa* in the *hāra* for the first time. The unfinished Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple, with its finished façade, having *kūṭa* in the *hāra* and advanced features in the form of lion-caryatids on its capitals, as also in its general plan, would likewise fall in the period of Paramēśvara.

The Yāḷi-maṇḍapam, which is a type by itself, is of the time of Rājasiṁha as indicated by the pilasters with rampant *vyālas* for their bases.

The two other unfinished *maṇḍapas* with lion- or *vyāla*-pillars or pilasters and without provision of the *hāra* over the façade would perhaps mark the decadence of the Māmalla style.

CHAPTER V

THE CAVE-TEMPLES

THE MAHĒNDRA STYLE

Period I

Maṇḍagappaṭṭu: Lakshita's cave-temple (fig. 5; pls. II-III)

THE CAVE-TEMPLE ON THE HILL AT MAṆḌAGAPPAṬṬU, IN VILLUPURAM TALUK of South Arcot District, forms the first of the series of caves excavated by Mahēndravarman I. His inscription, in which he styles himself as a *vichitra-chitta* ('curious-minded'), calls this temple Lakshitāyatana ('the temple of Lakshita'), dedicated to the Trimūrti. 'Lakshita' was one of his many *birudas* found in his inscriptions in the Pallāvaram and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi cave-temples.[1] The four-lined Sanskrit inscription, in the *gīti* metre, reads—

1 *Ētad-an-ishṭakam-a-druma*[*m-a-lō*]-
2 *ham-a-sudhaṁ* [*Vichitrachi*]*ttēna* [I*]
3 *nirmmāpitan-nṛipē*[*ṇa*] *Brahm-Ē-*
4 *śvara-Vishṇu-Lakshit āyatanam* [II*]

'This brickless, timberless, metalless and mortarless mansion of Lakshita was caused to be made by king Vichitrachitta for Brahmā, Īsvara and Vishṇu'.[2]

The temple is called an *āyatana*, dedicated to the Hindu Trinity, and is one of the very few such known examples. It is significant to note that Mahēndra dedicated his first cave-temple to the Trinity, most of his other cave-temples being Śaivite and a few others Vaishṇavite.

The inscription is a very important record in that it gives us definite evidence of the authorship and date of the first rock-cut Pallava-cave-temple. In view of this, Jouveau-Dubreuil's attribution of some cave-temples to Siṁhavishṇu[3] may not be correct. Since Mahēndra (Vichitrachitta) himself says that avoiding the perishable material of brick, timber, mortar and metal (used till his times for the construction of temples), he excavated this cave-temple for the Trinity in enduring stone, this must be deemed to be the first cave-temple in the south, excavated when he was a devotee of Śiva, Vishṇu and Brahmā.[4]

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, Nos. 8 and 13; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, nos. 41 of 1904 and 369 of 1908.

[2] The inscription has been edited by T. A. Gopinatha Rao in *Epigraphia Indica*, XVII, pp. 14-17. He and other subsequent writers have overlooked the significance of the word *Lakshitāyatana* and thus missed the name of the cave. See also *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 12, and *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, no. 56 of 1905.

[3] *Pallava Antiquities*, I (London, 1916), p. 51.

[4] The attribution of the Śittaṇṇavāśal cave-temple to Mahēndra and its excavation in his earlier days when he was supposed to be a Jaina, according to a later tradition, will thus need revision. If, as some believe, that Mahēndra spent his earlier days as a prince in the Telugu part of the Pallava country, north of Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, perhaps as an administrator, it would not be reasonable to suppose that he went all the way beyond the southernmost limits of the Pallava territory, south of the Kāvērī into the Pāṇḍya country, to excavate his first cave-temple as a Jaina.

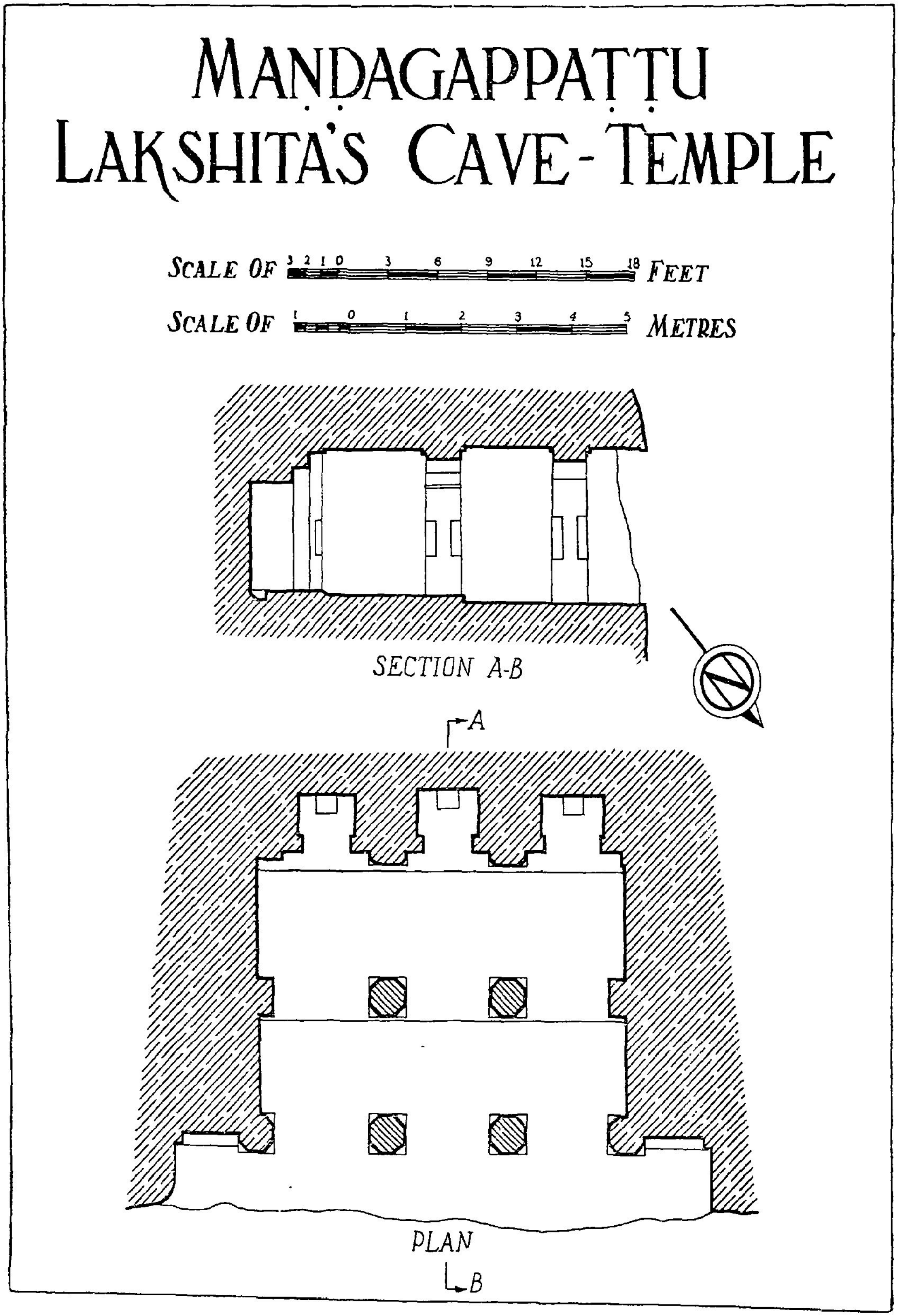
MANDAGAPPATTU
LAKSHITA'S CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
SECTION A-B
A
PLAN
B

FIG. 5

The cave is excavated on the northern face of the large rock overlooking the irrigation-tank on the west of Maṇḍagappaṭṭu village.[1] The façade is cut well back from the general face (pl. II), the depth of the cutting being 4 ft. at the bottom and 2 ft. at the top, the former serving as the floor of a platform in front of the cave and the latter as a crude cornice or *kapōta*, the top line of which is undulating with the maximum width of about 3 ft. at the centre and about 1 ft. at either end, thus averaging 2 ft. The lower part of this overhanging portion has been slightly undercut to a depth of about 1½ in., leaving a hanging lip along the outer line which would serve as the eaves or a drip-line for rain-water. Thus, it would be clear that there was no intention of making a straight ornamental *kapōta* with *kūḍu*-arches, characteristic of other Pallava cave-temples. There is also no provision for rock-cut steps, though the cutting is at a height of about 4 ft. from the natural ground-level in front.

The façade contains two pillars and two pilasters *in antis*, the pilasters on their northern and inner faces having the aspect of almost full pillars.

Beyond these pilasters, on either side of the façade, are cut two recesses for the *dvāra-pālas*. At the outer extremes, each of the two recesses has another pilaster undemarcated into *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*, but of a uniform tetragonal section. Each recess is enclosed between the outermost pilaster of the cave and the extreme pilaster immediately adjacent to the rock-cutting. These recesses are not true niches or *dēva-kōshṭas* in that they are not framed by jambs, sill and *tōraṇa*-topped lintel.

The pillars and pilasters are of the massive square type with an octagonal *kaṭṭu* dividing each of them into two cubes or *śadurams* above and below. The lower *śaduram* has a slightly greater height, the extra height being due to the height of its base (*ōma*). The corbels are plain without *taraṅga*-ornamentation and *paṭṭa*, but have a definitely curved profile (unlike those at Śiṅgavaram and Mēlachēri near by). The inscription of Mahēndravarman referred to above is engraved on the northern upper face of the western pilaster.

Immediately behind the façade is the front *maṇḍapa*, separated from an inner *ardha-maṇḍapa* behind by a row of two pillars and two pilasters. The floor of the front or *mukha-maṇḍapa* is at a slightly lower level than that of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The two pillars of the inner row correspond exactly in shape and dimensions to those of the façade except for the comparatively shorter height of their lower *śadurams*, which is due to their standing on a slightly-raised floor. What is more important is the presence on the top of their upper *śadurams* of a projected small *phalaka*, which, unlike those in the Śiṅgavaram and Mēlachēri caves, does not have a straight edge but is composed of a doucene-moulding below with a straight *kampa* above, this moulding, though thin, standing perhaps for the *padma* or *pāli*. It is on the top of this that the massive corbels with a curved profile are cut. The pilasters at either extreme of this inner row, unlike those of the pilasters of the façade, do not show the differentiation into *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*, though on the top they show the *phalaka*-moulding at least in the frontal aspect.

Over each of the two rows of pillars and pilasters is cut the principal beam or *uttira*, that over the inner row slightly thicker than that on the outer row. At either end, cut over the side walls, are two cross-beams which, curiously enough, do not go over the two principal longitudinal beams or even under them but are on the same level with them. Perhaps the cross-beams are, in imitation of their counterparts fixed by scarf joints

[1] The association of an early Pallava rock-cut cave-temple with a large irrigation-tank near by is interesting. At Mahēndravāḍi, the inscription expressly states that the creator of the cave-temple was also the creator of the tank. Other examples are Śiyamaṅgalam, Daḷavānūr, Vallam, Vilāppākkam, Mēlachēri, etc.

in the structural prototypes. Over the beams is cut a *vājana*, projecting beyond the width of the beam by about 3 in. and having a height of about 2 in. The ceiling on the top is plain and is dressed level as the rock-floor below.

On the back wall of this *ardha-maṇḍapa* are again cut four symmetrical pilasters corresponding to the two rows of pillars and pilasters in front. The pilasters coming directly behind the two pillars of the front row are segmented into *śaduram* and *kaṭṭu*, while the two extreme pilasters resemble the extreme ones of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* in front of them, in having a uniform tetragonal section throughout. These pilasters have their top sections slightly cut back to the level of the front face of the corbels, which appear to have a greater width than those of the pilasters. This is in contrast to the corbels of the two front rows, where their thickness is equal to that of the top *śaduram* in the case of the façade and the width of the *phalaka* in the case of the row in front of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The corbels are of plain type without any *taraṅga*-ornamentation.

As in the case of the pillars and pilasters of the façade and the inner row, separating the two parts of the *maṇḍapa*, there is a longitudinal beam running over the corbels of the pilasters on the hind wall, its width being the same as the beams in front. Two more cross-beams are cut at either end exactly in the same manner as in the front *maṇḍapa*. Over these longitudinal and cross-beams framing the ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is cut a projecting *vājana* as in the *maṇḍapa* in front. The ceiling here too is finished as also the floor below.

In the spaces between the pilasters on the back wall are cut three plain oblong niches, each about 3 ft. deep, having sockets at the bases of their back walls to receive the tenons of standing bas-reliefs, which, though now absent, should have been, according to the inscription, those of Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva. The bas-reliefs were evidently placed leaning against the back wall and not planted at the centre of the cells, as is usual in all later temples.

There are traces of thick plaster on the back wall with faint indication of paintings, particularly in the westernmost cell. This would indicate that the three objects of worship, viz. Śiva, Brahmā and Vishṇu, were originally in painting and that the sockets for the bas-reliefs in stone or wood were introduced later. The entrance of each cell is flanked by two plain jambs cut out on the inside, so that the lateral wall of each cell is slightly recessed. The floor-level of the three shrines is cut about 3 ft. higher than that of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* in front and there are no mouldings of an *adhishṭhāna*. All the walls of the two *maṇḍapas* are plain and without any sculpture.

The two *dvāra-pālas* are slightly dissimilar. The one at the eastern end (pl. IIIA) is in semi-profile, the left hand hanging down with the top of the handle of the massive club stuck into his arm-pit. His right arm is bent across his chest to the left with the palm placed over the top of the club inside his left arm-pit. He has a fierce aspect and wears a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* with a large *jaṭā-bhāra* on either side, large *patra-kuṇḍalas* in his ears, a *hāra* of *phalakas* round his neck, three wristlets round each of his wrists and a coiled bracelet in his upper arm. He wears a *vastra-yajñōpavīta* in the ordinary *upavīta* fashion and has a *kaṭi-bandha* in addition to his tucked-up short *vastra*, which is secured at the waist by a belt of *phalakas* with two tassels hanging down from a *siṁhamukha* clasp. In addition, a folded cloth is wound loose around his waist. He has his right leg planted straight and his left leg raised up and bent at the knee. He is facing towards the cave.

The *dvāra-pāla* at the western extreme (pl. IIIB) is facing full front, standing in *tribhaṅga* and looking as fierce as his counterpart. He wears a slightly different *kirīṭa* and a larger *jaṭā-bhāra*, and over his *kirīṭa* is looped a large serpent like a garland. His other ornaments are similar to those of his counterpart. His right hand is in *kaṭi* and left is bent at

the elbow, the forearm resting on the top of the handle of the upright club. The club itself is entwined by another serpent. His *vastra-yajñopavīta* differs slightly from that of the other, in that it is worn in the *nivīta* fashion. He has two tusks like the other *dvāra-pāla*. His head is slightly turned right towards the cave-entrance.

Both the *dvāra-pālas* have the slim form characteristic of Pallava sculptures, but neither has a horn-like appendage behind the head. The feet of both are left uncut; also uncut are the bulbous part of the massive club in front of the eastern *dvāra-pāla*, except its narrow handle, and the lower tip of the club of the western one. All these indicate that the sculpturing of the *dvāra-pālas* was taken up at a later stage as an afterthought.

The absence of other sculptures inside is again an indication of the early date of the cave-temple.

Pallāvaram: Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple (fig. 6; pl. IV)

Pallāvaram (Pallavapuram—the Pallava city), in Saidapet Taluk of Chingleput District, is about 10 miles south of Madras and 30 miles east of Kāñchī, the Pallava capital. The local rock is of the best variety of charnockite, famous as the Pallavaram blue-metal or blue-granite.

The cave-temple, called Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple (pl. IVA), is excavated on the southern slope of a hillock called Pañchapāṇḍava-malai by the Hindus and Maula-kā-pahād by the Muslims, among the quarry-hills to the east of the present village overlooking a large irrigation-tank. In order to get a vertical scarp, the sloping rock has been cut well back to a depth of about 15 ft. at the bottom from the original surface, thereby giving rise to an open platform (31 ft. × 13 ft.) in front of the cave-temple. This platform has a flight of rock-cut steps in front with a sloping parapet, much of it obscured by the modern cement-paved masonry platform, (pl. IV B) which is reached by a flight of some fifty cut-stone steps from the ground-level.[1]

The excavation proper consists of an oblong *mukha-maṇḍapa*, an *ardha-maṇḍapa* of almost similar dimensions behind it and five shrines cut into the back-wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The façade of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* is divided into five bays by four massive pillars and two pilasters, one at either end. While the two pilasters at the extremes are cubical in section throughout (unlike those at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu), the intervening four pillars are divided into three sections, square *śadurams* above and below with an octagonal *kaṭṭu* in between.[2] The height of the lower *śaduram* of the two central pillars is slightly greater than the height of the lower *śadurams* of the two pillars on either side of this pair, while the top *śadurams* of the entire series are identical in dimensions.

Cut on the top of the pillars and pilasters are massive corbels with a definitely curved profile and without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation. Over the corbel is cut a beam (*uttira*),

[1] The open rock-cut platform in front of the cave is now covered over by a sloping zinc-sheet roof carried on rail-pillars in front.

[2] Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. i, p. 16, states that of the two central pillars of the façade, the eastern one has its octagonal section at the bottom, an accident due to the carelessness of the mason. The old drawings and photographs (e.g. no. 15 of 1909 of the Government Epigraphist's collection), and the illustration in Longhurst, *op. cit.*, pl. III b, show this feature. However, in *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1909, p. 72, paragraph 10, it is noted, no doubt by mistake, that 'the octagonal part of the pillar is out of place and is at the top instead of being at the middle', though the photograph shows it at the bottom. This discrepancy seems to have been rectified in recent times by repairs to the basal part with plaster so as to make it a square and by chamfering the middle part into a regular octagon. These irregularities besides other factors indicate that this was an early attempt.

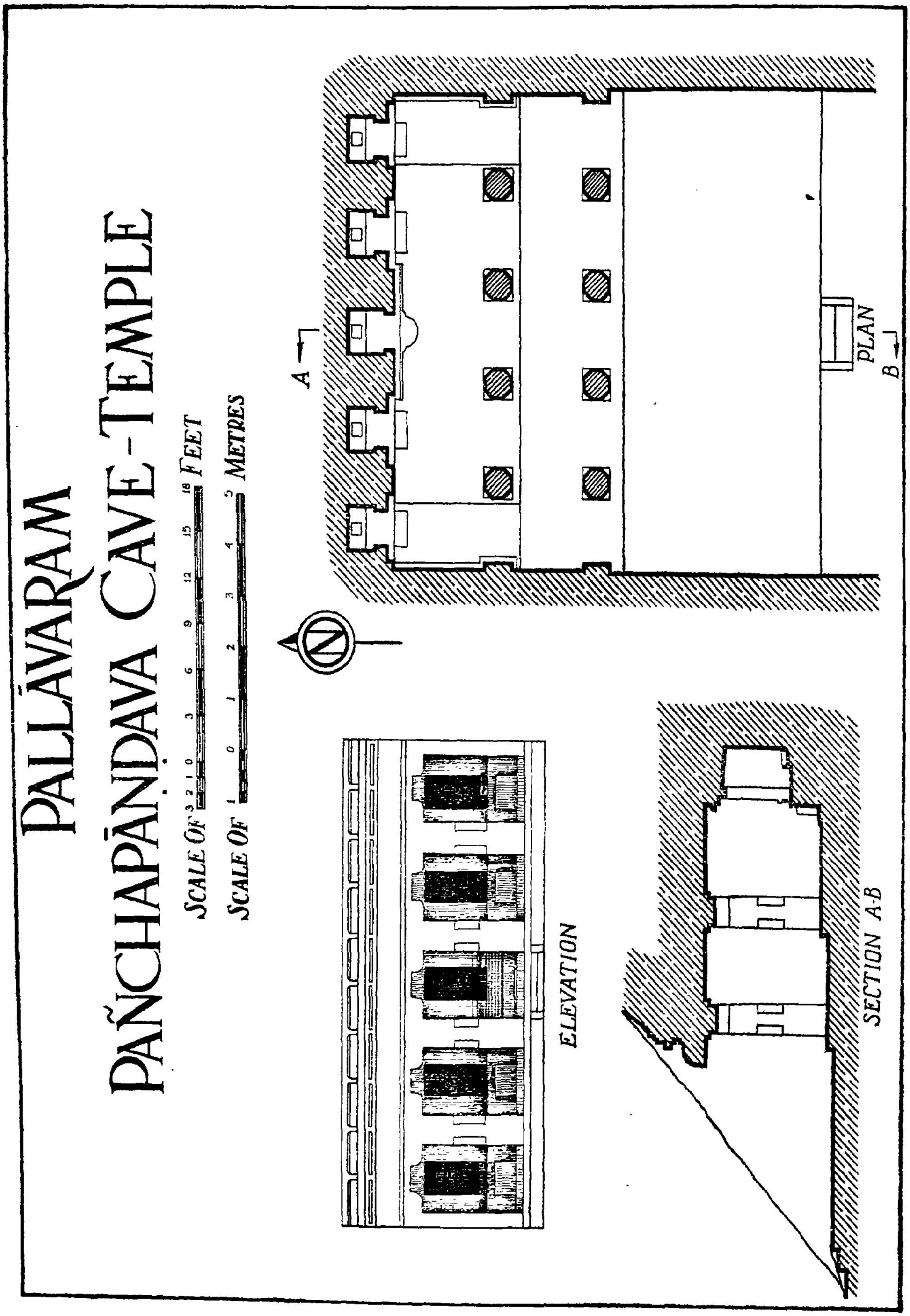
PALLĀVARAM
PAÑCHAPĀṆḌAVA CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
A
B
PLAN
ELEVATION
SECTION A-B

FIG. 6

the height and width of which almost correspond to those of the corbels below. Over the beam is cut a thin but wider plank showing as a *vājana*-moulding on either side, as if supporting the ceiling inside and the projected curved cornice or *kapōta* outside. The undersurface of the *kapōta* is not scooped out but is dressed even, while externally also the characteristic *kūḍu*-ornaments are absent, though the flexure is very well finished. Over the cornice-line are shown eleven projecting ends of oblong joists without the characteristic *vyāla-* or *haṁsa*-decorations; over the beam-ends runs an *ālinga*.

At the rear of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* and forming the front of the oblong *ardha-maṇḍapa* is the second row of pillars and pilasters in direct alignment with the front row on a slightly higher floor-level.[1] The noticeable differences are that the extreme pilasters do not carry corbels and their shafts directly abut on the ceiling; that the two extreme pillars are without the *kaṭṭu* and carry three-armed corbels with inward cross-projections as if to support the cross-beams above, running longitudinally towards the back wall to rest on the frontally-projected corbel-arms carried on the tops of two pilasters cut on the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* which are in alignment with the two outer pillars in front. The two central pillars are, however, divided into three parts, *śadurams* above and below and *kaṭṭu* in between, carrying corbels with two lateral arms to support the transverse beam. No cross-beam is noticeable at either extreme, where the pilaster of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* row itself does not carry a corbel. Thus, the ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is divided into three bays by the two cross-beams, the central bay forming the ceiling in front of the three central shrine-entrances, each of the two lateral beams coming between the intermediate and the extreme shrine-entrance of that side.

Into the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and between the pilasters are cut five shrine-cells, the central one alone slightly projected in front of the general line with an *adhishṭhāna* or base-moulding. It also had originally a short flight of three steps, which have been cut away, leaving the lowermost *chandra-śilā* alone intact over the floor of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. Cut at the base of the back wall of the various shrines are low oblong benches with central square sockets. It is clear that, as in all other early Pallava caves, there was neither a *liṅga* cut out in the shrine-cells nor a contemporary one installed. The position of this platform cut well behind the centre of the shrine and close to the back wall and the socket (which was perhaps later), would indicate the installation more of a sculpture plaque leaning against the back wall or a stucco relief than of a *liṅga*, which should normally occupy the centre of the floor. The provision of the two cross-beams to enclose a central *aṅkaṇa* of the ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* in front of the three principal central shrine-cells and the two cells flanking one on each side would indicate that these three cells were to enshrine three principal deities, perhaps Śiva in the centre and Brahmā and Vishṇu in the other two, while the extreme cells were for subsidiary deities. In the present state, however, there is absolutely no extant clue to the original dedication of this cave-temple.[2]

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[1] Both the floors are now so paved with cement with considerable projection in front that their original nature cannot be ascertained.

[2] The cave-temple has been converted into a Muslim *dargāh*. At present the central *dargāh*-shrine is formed by the projection of two masonry-walls in front of the *adhishṭhāna* enclosing the central bay of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* with a door in front. At either extreme the cross-walls extend to the *mukha-maṇḍapa*, also forming two side-rooms. The cave-temple is heavily white-washed obliterating inscriptions or other markings. A few inscriptions, however, are still found on the back faces of the beam of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* and on the eastern and western faces of the two cross-beams that are cut over the projecting corbels of the pillars and the pilasters of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*.

Of the inscriptions the one that has been copied and published[1] is of a single line in Pallava-grantha script; it occurs on the beams of the *ardha-* and *mukha-maṇḍapas.* It gives a long list of *birudas*, some of them obscure in their import, of Mahēndravarman I, with whose name (*Śrī Mahēndravikramaḥ*) it commences. These titles are in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu and indicate the character, emotion and personal tastes of the king. Some of them are also found in the upper cave at Tiruchirāpaḷḷi. The significant among them are *Chēttakāri*, *Vichitra-chitta*, *Saṅkīrṇa-jāti*, *Guṇabhara*, *Chitrakārapuli*, *Mattavilāsa*, *Satyasandha Lakshita*, *Avanibhājana*, *Lalitāṅkura* and *Śatrumalla*, which are used as the names of his other cave-temples and as his own name in their excavation.

It is unusual for a Hindu temple, even a cave-temple of the Pallava times, to have all the shrine-cells facing south. Even in those cave-temples in which the façade of the verandah faces south, due to restriction and choice of a suitable place for excavation, the shrine-cells are cut into the side walls either on the east or on the west, so that the enshrined deities face east or west. Otherwise, the choice is so made that the entire cave-temple, including the shrine, faces east, west or north.[2]

On the top of the hill almost over the cave-temple is noticeable an attempt to excavate a square tank or tarn, about 15 ft. $\times$20 ft., the method of excavation being similar to that of the excavation of cave-temples into vertical surfaces. The almost horizontal part of the rock is cut into a number of square blocks by a number of deep cross-channels, the ultimate idea being to cut away the projecting blocks by side strokes.

On the slope just to the east of the cave and adjoining it, there is another attempt to excavate into the rock, probably another cave-temple. The excavation was abandoned owing to the natural fault in the rock and the unsuitability of the place.

Māmaṇḍūr II: Rudravāliśvaram cave-temple (fig. 7; pls. V-VII)

Māmaṇḍūr, in Cheyyār Taluk, North Arcot District, is about 8 miles south of Kāñchī, the Pallava capital. Māmaṇḍūr and the adjacent village Narasapāḷaiyam contain in all four excavations on the eastern face of three hillocks common to both the villages, running north-south in a continuous chain to the west of Māmaṇḍūr and forming the natural bund of a very large irrigation-tank. While the two northernmost cave-temples are nearer each other, being excavated on the same hill, the third from the north is an excavation on the south-east corner of the central prominence of the chain, and the fourth, the southernmost, is at the northern end of the southern hill of the group.

Of the four caves, the two finished ones on the northern side are included in the revenue village of Māmaṇḍūr (old name Māvaṇḍūr), which also contains a structural temple, the Maṇḍūkanātha. The two southern caves are included in the adjoining revenue village of Narasapāḷaiyam. The Chōḷa inscriptions in the second cave from the north mention that the temple was situated at Narasiṅgamaṅgalam, no doubt the old name of Narasapāḷaiyam; this shows that in ancient times all the hills belonged to the Narasiṅgamaṅgalam village. Behind the hills is the large irrigation-tank, called *Chitramēgha-taṭāka*, attributed to Mahēndravarman I, the chain of hills itself forming its bund.

The second excavation, immediately to the south of the first, is slightly larger than the other. From the two early Chōḷa inscriptions in Tamil[3] found inside this cave-temple

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[1] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1908, no. 369; *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 13.

[2] It is also unusual for a *dargāh* or a Muslim place of worship and its central shrine to face south.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, nos. 137 and 138; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, nos. 39 and 40 of 1888.

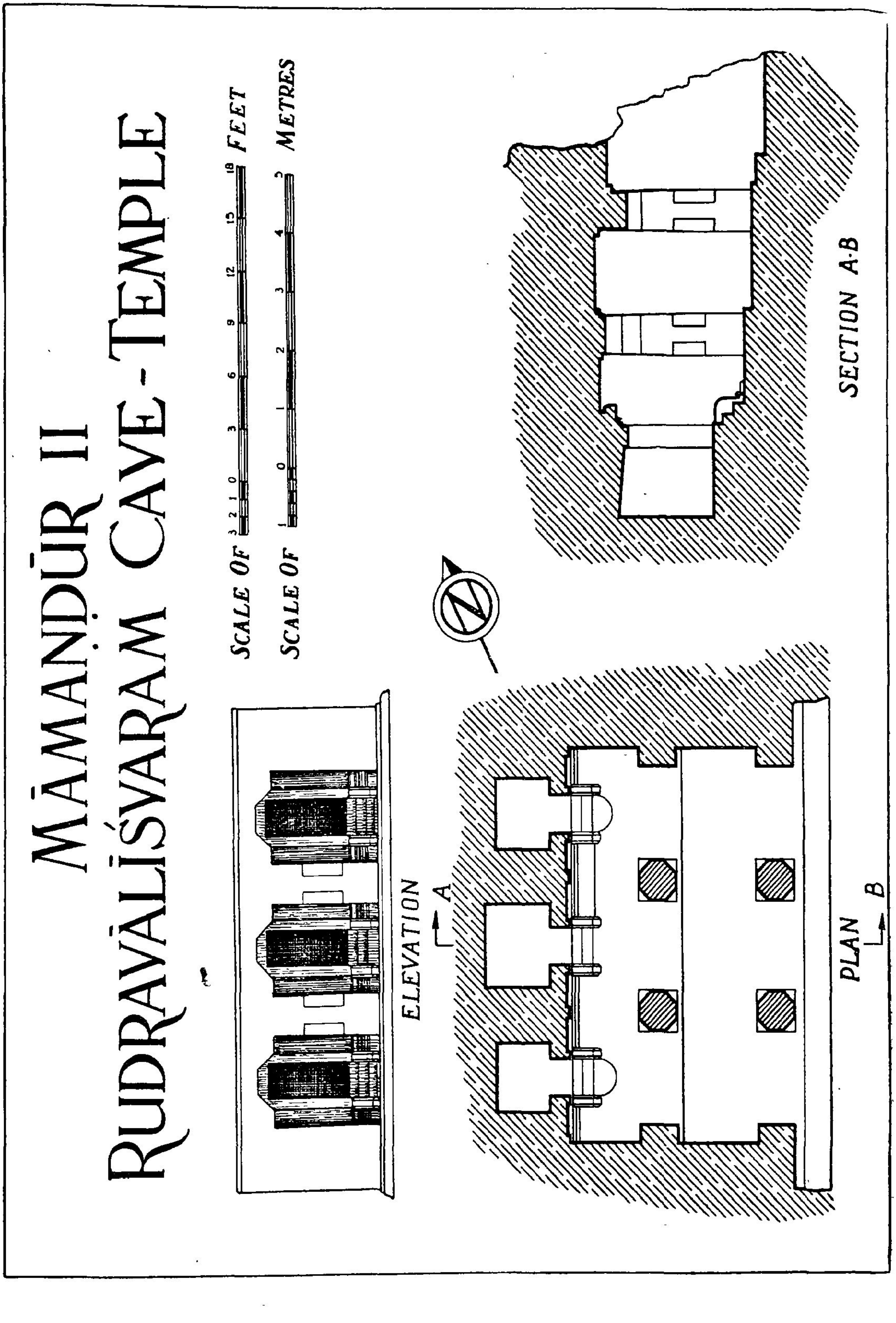
MĀMANDŪR II
RUDRAVĀLĪŚVARAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
ELEVATION
A
PLAN
B
SECTION A·B

FIG. 7.

we know that the principal deity to which this was dedicated was Śiva. One inscription calls it Rudravālīśvaram (*Uruttiravālīśvaram*), and the other calls it simply *Vālīśvaram.* While all the cave-temples excavated by Mahēndra or by others in his name contain Pallava-grantha inscriptions recording the fact of excavation, naming them after his *birudas* or merely recording his *birudas*, this cave-temple, peculiarly, has no inscription on it either of Mahēndra or of the Pallava period. But judging from its architectural and archaic features and its proximity to the first cave to its north, which has a Mahēndra inscription, it is attributed here to that ruler. It is after Narasimhavarman Māmalla, his successor, that the village Narasiṅgamaṅgalam is named. Perhaps, Māmalla completed the irrigation-projects and also effected a settlement here and named it after himself.

This cave-temple, like the Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and Pallāvaram ones of Mahēndra, has the front verandah differentiated into an *ardha-maṇḍapa* and *mukha-maṇḍapa* having two rows of pillars and three shrines on the back wall. The central shrine perhaps was dedicated to Śiva and the lateral ones to the other two of the Trinity.

The rock-surface chosen for this excavation not being quite vertical but sloping, the cutting in to reach the vertical face for the excavation has been deeper—about 8 ft. at the base and 3 ft. on the top (pl. V). The façade of the actual excavation consists of two massive pillars in the centre with two pilasters, one at either extreme, with considerable plain-dressed space beyond the pilasters on either flank, since the cut has been wider than the actual length of the façade of the pillars and pilasters. The spaces on either side of the extreme pilasters, though dressed, are left plain and show, like the pillar-front, traces of plaster and thin stucco with paint. The two pillars are more massive than those in the adjoining cave; they are differentiated into the three sectors, the tops and bottoms being *śadurams* and the intervening portions being octagonal *kaṭṭus.* The sides of the lower *śadurams* as well as their heights uniformly average 2 ft. 3 in., there being no provision for a plinth below. The top *śadurams,* 2 ft. 3 in. wide, are nearly 6 in. lesser in height, while the intervening *kaṭṭu* is 2 ft. 6 in. high. Thus, the reduction in the height of the top *śaduram* has been added to the height of the intervening *kaṭṭu.* This discrepancy, as at Pallāvaram, was perhaps due to lack of experience in the new work.

The pilasters at either extreme are as wide as the pillars themselves, uniformly square from base to top but without an intervening *kaṭṭu.* While their depth is marked off internally by the recessed side walls of the *maṇḍapa* behind, the prepared rock-surfaces in front are flush with the frontal sides of the pilasters leaving them undemarcated outwardly. The pillars and pilasters carry heavy corbels, which also differ from the adjoining cave-temple, in that they have rather angular profiles as opposed to the curved profiles of the corbels found there. As in the first cave, the *taraṅga*-ornamentation is also absent here. The length of the corbels is three times the width of the pillars, while their width is equal to that of the pillars, the height of the corbels being the same as the height of the beam above, which incidentally has the same width as the corbels.

The *kapōta* on top of the façade is also unfinished, though there was enough of the rock to complete it. Even otherwise the natural cleft running almost from end to end would have prevented its being finished externally into a curved *kapōta.* However, the undersurface has been rendered plain, and this contains traces of plaster and paint, though the painted designs are not visible. The *valabhī* below the cornice as well as the tops of the pillars show bands of green, red and yellow paint over thin stucco. On the northern side wall of the *maṇḍapa* just inside the northern pilaster is the inscription of Rājarāja I Chōḷa, which calls

this temple Rudravālīśvaram of Narasiṅgamaṅgalam in Uttama-chōḷīśvara-puram.[1] This inscription also mentions the *Chitramēgha-taṭāka* and refers to the village as being situated on the eastern bank of this large Pallava irrigation-lake.

Behind the front row of pillars and pilasters is cut another row, thus dividing the oblong verandah into a front *mukha-maṇḍapa* and a hind *ardha-maṇḍapa*. This differentiation is extended to the floors of the two regions, the rock-floor of the front *maṇḍapa* being lower than the rock-floor of the rear by about 6 in. The two pillars and two pilasters of this rear row are identical with the pillars and pilasters of the front row. The height of the lower *śadurams* of the pillars exceed their width of 2 ft. 3 in. by about 3 in. allowing for a plinth below; further, there is a slight tapering noticed towards the top since the top *śadurams* are about 1 in. less in width and 6 in. less in height. The height of the *kaṭṭu* is the same as the height of the *śaduram*. Behind the southernmost pilaster on the southern wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is the second early Chōḷa inscription of Parakēsarivarman. The inscription calls this temple Vālīśvaram in Narasiṅgamaṅgalam on the eastern bank of the Chitramēgha-taṭāka.[2] Over the beams of both the *mukha-maṇḍapa* and *ardha-maṇḍapa* projects the planking course, which, on the front of the main façade, is not worked out into the usual convex *valabhī*. Internally, this course over the beams on top of the two lines of pillars and pilasters extends as a *vājana*-course right round below the ceiling.

The back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is pierced by three openings, each leading into a cell. The floor of the cells being higher than the floor of the *maṇḍapa* in front, the intervening rock-portion has been utilized for the cutting of the mouldings of an *adhishṭhāna* interrupted by three rock-cut *sōpānas* with curved parapets resembling the probosces of elephants, the width of each *sōpāna* corresponding to the width of the corresponding shrine-entrance. While the two extreme *sōpānas* each have a *chandra-śilā* below, the central one has none. Each *sopāna* is a flight of three steps. The *adhishṭhāna* visible in between the *sōpānas* consists of a vertical *jagatī*, octagonal *kumuda* and recessed *kaṇṭha*, with two *kampa*-mouldings, one above the other, and a projecting *paṭṭikā*-moulding on top. The *kaṇṭha*-moulding has reliefs at places below the pilasters that adorn the walls above. On the top of the *paṭṭikā* is the *prati*-moulding carrying ten pilasters spaced out almost uniformly.

The three shrine-entrances are cut actually between three pairs of wall-pilasters, the pairs concerned forming the jambs of their doorways. Thus, leaving out the jamb-pilasters, the four other pilasters are distributed one at either extremity and one each between the central shrine-entrance and extreme shrine-entrance of that side. The spaces formed by these pilasters coming between the shrine-entrance and the end pilasters are utilized as *dvāra-pāla* niches. The pilasters are uniformly four-sided throughout and do not carry any capital-members except the corbels, which have a definite curved profile. Over the corbels runs a beam and over it again is a curved *valabhī*-moulding with a prominently projecting *kapōta* on top, its undersurface even and external surface cut into a convex eaves moulding. The *kapōta* running on top of the pilasters and niches contains traces of old plaster with painting, which has darkened considerably due to age and other factors.

The *dvāra-pālas* in the niches flanking the shrine-entrances, three pairs in all, differ from each other and are indicative of the deities to which the respective shrines were dedicated (pls. VI and VII). The central shrine, which, according to the inscription,

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 137. The village of Narasiṅgamaṅgalam, so named in Pallava times, was a part of Uttama-chōḷīśvara-puram in Chōḷa times.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 138. The fact that the name *Uttama-chōlapuram* is not given here would show that this Parakēsari was either Uttama-chōḷa himself, after whose name the place was named, or an earlier Parakēsari, probably Parāntaka I.

must have been dedicated to Śiva, has two *dvāra-pālas* of the usual type resting on clubs with heavy *jaṭā-bhāras* and fierce looks, their *yajñōpavīta* worn in the *nivīta* fashion. They wear large *patra-kuṇḍalas*. Neither has the characteristic bison's horns. The *dvāra-pālas* of the southern shrine are similar to each other but differ from the central pair. They have the appearance of *ṛishis*, their *jaṭās* prominently knotted on top, their *vastra-yajñōpavītas* being in the *nivīta* fashion, their faces heavily bearded and their *vastras* reaching to the ankles in the *kachchha* fashion. Both of them turn towards the shrine-entrance and hold a lotus in their inner hands. While the outer hand of the western one is in *kaṭi*, that of the northern one is in *kaṭaka* (or *mṛigi*). Perhaps, these indicate that the shrine was dedicated to Brahmā. The *dvāra-pālas* of the northern shrine, both facing front, are identical with each other but are entirely different from the two other sets of *dvāra-pālas*. They wear enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas* and *nivīta-yajñōpavītas* and stand in *tribhaṅga*, the inner hands raised in adoration towards the shrine-entrance and the outer ones placed in *kaṭi*. The third shrine was perhaps dedicated to Vishṇu.

The back and side walls of the three shrine-cells contain traces of old plaster and paint; perhaps the original consecrated deities were only paintings or low painted stucco reliefs. The square sockets of different sizes cut in the floors of the three shrines nearer the back wall appear to be later devices for accommodating the conical tenons at the base of sculptures. The platform found in other caves is absent here. In the central shrine is now placed a small cylindrical *liṅga* with an *āvuḍaiyār*, both of polished black stone. The *liṅga* has its *sūtra* lines marked. The *āvuḍaiyār* is placed on a square slab with an uneven tenon-like bottom which does not fit exactly into the square hole below. So this misfit would appear to be an installation much later than what the socket was intended to hold subsequent to the excavation of the cave-temple.

Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam: Kal-maṇḍakam cave-temple (fig. 8; pls. VIII-X)

Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam, in Cheyyar Taluk, North Arcot District, lies about 2 miles from Māmaṇḍūr and 6 miles from Kāñchīpuram. The rock-cut cave-temple here, facing east, has been carved on the once-buried eastern side of a low outcrop near the village named Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam. The adjoining hamlet is known as Pallavapuram. There is no Pallava inscription in the cave, but it has a strong resemblance to the larger one at Māmaṇḍūr near by and has many archaic features, thereby proclaiming its affiliation with the Mahēndra group. The inscription of Kannaradēva found here[1], which has not yet been correctly read, clearly reads *Kāliyūr-Kōṭṭattu-Ērikiḻnāṭṭu-Pallavapurattu-ne.ṅgaḻūr-Kalmaṇḍakat-tāḻvārukku*. The name of the temple, therefore, cannot be read as *Kalmaḍaikātiāḻvar*. The name *Kalmaṇḍakattāḻvār* itself is clear and *Kalmaṇḍakam* refers to the cave-temple.[2] The appellation *āḻvār* need not necessarily denote Vishṇu in such early times and lead to the conclusion that the temple was originally Vaishṇavite.

Since the original rock-face is sloping down, it has been cut to a depth of about 4 ft. at the bottom, so that a vertical scarp could be obtained for the excavation of the cave-temple, the façade of which occupies almost the entire height of the rock. On top, this depth is hardly less than half a foot, and immediately above it, the crest of the rock is reached. The excavation is offset on the four sides by a small relieved frame-moulding,

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[1] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1912, no. 295; also *ibid.*, 1913, II, p. 84. There are four other inscriptions round the square bases of the four pillars of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* and the *ardha-maṇḍapa*.

[2] Cf. the name Orukal-maṇḍapam, Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and other names of *maṇḍapams* given to the cave-temples at Mahābalipuram.

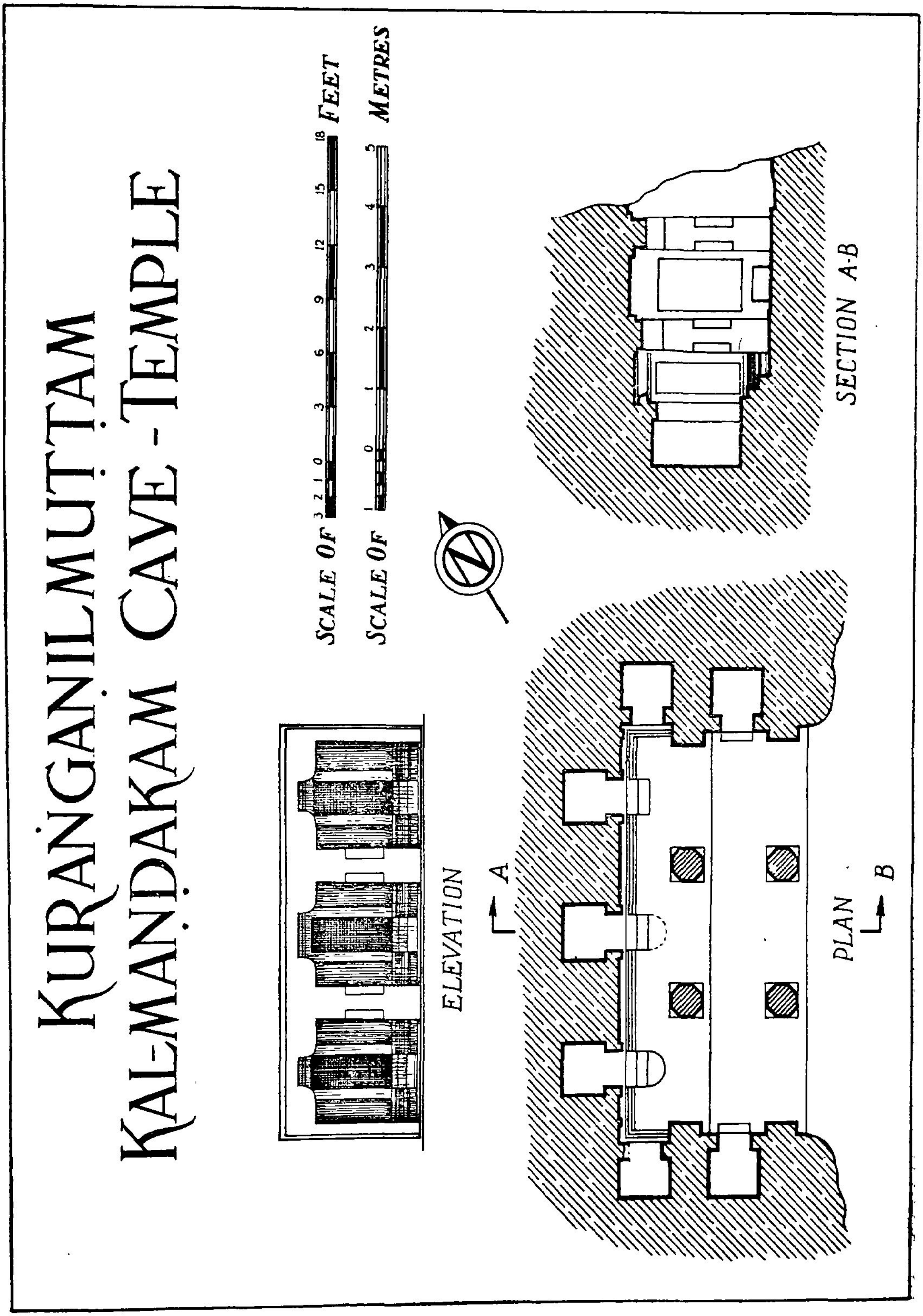
KURAṄGAṆILMUṬṬAM
KAL-MAṆḌAKAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
ELEVATION
PLAN
SECTION A-B
A
B

FIG. 8

which has been cut overdoor-like round the actual façade of two central pillars and two extreme pilasters (pl. VIII). While the shafts of the two central pillars have each been differentiated into the basal and top *śadurams* and the intermediate portion into an octagonal *kaṭṭu*, the two pilasters at either end are undifferentiated into the three parts and remain tetragonal from the base to the top. The profile of the massive corbels on the top of the pillars and pilasters, with their lower surfaces almost straight, has a sharp upward turn at the bend. Over the corbels the beam-portion is cut to the thickness of the corbels. On the top of the beam is the offset-projection, referred to above, forming the *vājana.* There is hardly any projecting rock-ledge on the top to form the cornice, the original outline of the rock forming a sort of very meagre eaves or *kapōta* with a discontinuous line. Any attempt to cut a *sōpāna* in front of the façade is not visible, since the floor in front has been levelled up and plastered almost even with the floor-level of the *maṇḍapa* behind.

Immediately behind the façade is the oblong hall and along its middle line is cut an identical set of pillars and pilasters, thus dividing the hall into a front portion—the *mukha-maṇḍapa*, and a hind portion—the *ardha-maṇḍapa.* The rock-floor of the latter is slightly raised than that in front.

On the back wall of the inner *maṇḍapa* is cut a row of ten pilasters at intervals from end to end. These pilasters are mounted on top of a moulded *adhishṭhāna* consisting of an *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, with *kampa* mouldings above and below, and *prati* on the top. Along the length of the *kaṇṭha* are slight reliefs in places below the respective pilasters to mark them as their basal projections. Between the second and third pilasters from either end and between the two central pilasters are shrine-entrances with cubical cells cut into the rock behind. Thus, there are three cubical shrine-chambers on the back wall, each shrine-entrance with a pilaster on either side as its jamb. In the space on either side of the shrine-entrances and between the pilasters are three pairs of *dvāra-pālas*, each pair appropriate to each of the three shrines, the entrances of which they flank (pls. IX and X). The *dvāra-pālas* of the southern pair are almost identical and stand facing front in *tribhaṅga*, their outer hands placed in *kaṭi* and their inner hands in *kaṭaka* in position to hold something, perhaps a flower towards the shrine. The only difference among them lies in their *yajñōpavītas*: while the northern one of the pair has it in the *upavīta* fashion, the southern one has it in the *nivīta* fashion. The *dvāra-pālas* on either side of the central shrine- entrance, though essentially identical in dress, in ornament, in accoutrement and in the hands that rest on massive clubs with intertwining serpents, differ from each other, in that the southern one is in profile facing the shrine-entrance, while the northern one faces front. Both of them wear *sarpa-yajñōpavītas* and the southern one wears a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* over his *jaṭābhāra*, which shows one of the two bovine horns on one side indicating Nandi (or Śriṅgi). The crown of the other *dvāra-pāla* is broken, but he does not have the horns. These features indicate that the central shrine was that of Śiva. The *dvāra-pālas* of the northern shrine are identical, both facing front in *tribhaṅga* with *jaṭā-makuṭas*, *nivīta-yajñō-pavītas*, outer hands in *kaṭi* and inner hands in *abhaya.*

The tops of the pilasters on the hind wall are not differentiated into capital-components and directly carry the corbels which have a curved profile and which do not show the *taraṅga* ornamentation. On the top over the beam above the corbels runs a square *vājana*-moulding carrying a *kapōta.* In front of each shrine, the continuity of the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings is interrupted by a flight of three rock-cut steps, the lowermost being a *chandra-śilā.*

The *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings as well as the *vājana* and *kapōta* on top are extended round the corners to the side walls of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* which have excavated into them, two more shrine-cells, without pilasters or jambs for their entrances. Likewise, two more

roughly-cut shrine-cells are excavated into the side walls of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* without, however, the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings below them, but with a single rock-cut step in their place. Curiously enough, the *vājana* and *kapōta* are extended from the inside as if through the beam over the inner row of pillars and pilasters. Therefore, they could not be deemed continuous but separate pieces cut for these two lateral shrines. None of the seven shrines has any rock-cut sculpture, painted or stucco form inside. Two sandstone sculptures, of a slightly later date, of Brahmā and Śiva are leaning respectively against the back walls of the southern and central main shrines. However, there are oblong sockets of different dimensions cut into the floors of these cells, some of them not more than long slits.

Peculiarly, the Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam cave is at a very much lower level than the surrounding ground, judging from the height of which, over the floor-level of the cave, one has to presume that the ground had to be dug to expose the base of the low outcrop in order to excavate the cave-temple.

In the *Tēvāram*, saint Sambhandar has sung a decad on the god of this place[1]; there is no reference in it to this cave-temple but to a tall *māḍakkvōil*, a contemporary brick structure which preceded the present masonry temple in the village called Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam.[2]

Evidently this was a multi-celled rock-cut temple designed on the model of Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, Pallāvaram and Māmaṇḍur II, but the plan seems to have been altered later, to include the four additional shrines on the lateral walls as the continuous *kapōta* on the top and the *adhishṭhāna* below would indicate. However, the fact that it was in worship is attested by the later inscriptions. Perhaps the original plan with three cells behind was designed for the *Trimūrti*.

Vallam I: Vasantēśvaram cave-temple (fig. 9; pl. XI)

Vallam, in Chingleput Taluk and District, is about 20 miles to the south-east of Kāñchī and 40 miles south of Madras and has a low hillock adjoining the village, which is 2 miles from Chingleput.

The three cave-temples on the eastern face of the hillock (pl. XI A) overlook the small village of Vallam. The caves are excavated at three slightly different heights. Of the three, two are cut on the eastern faces of two boulders perched one above the other, the upper and the most important one standing well behind the lower cave. The top of the lower excavated boulder thus forms a sort of a platform in front of the upper cave.

The uppermost cave-temple, Vallam I, the largest in the group, is the most perfect and typical of the Mahēndra style. There are three inscriptions carved on the front faces of the pillars of the façade. The one on the south gives two of the *birudas* of Mahēndravarman, viz. *Pakāppiḍuku, Lalitāṅkuraṉ*[3] in Tamil. Of the two inscriptions on the front face of the northern pillar, the upper one, also in early Tamil, gives the other *birudas* of Mahēndra in continuation and mentions that the temple was excavated by Skandasēna, son of Vasantapriyarāja, who was a vassal of Mahēndrapōtarāja. The two inscriptions, which call the temple, a *dēvakulam*, reads together:—

[1] *Tēvāram*, I, 31, vv. 327-337.

[2] This perhaps would be a modification of the name Kurakkēṇimuṭṭam where *Kurakkēṇi* would indicate a cell or vault situated below ground and *muṭṭam* the natural high ground or mound into which the temple has been sunk. This was later, perhaps, corrupted into *Kuraṅgaṇimuṭṭam* and *Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam*, which has led to the legend of the monkey, squirrel and the crow having worshipped the god. See *Transactions of the Archaeological Society of South India* (Madras), 1958-59, pp. 9-10.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, pt. iii, no. 72, pp. 340-42.

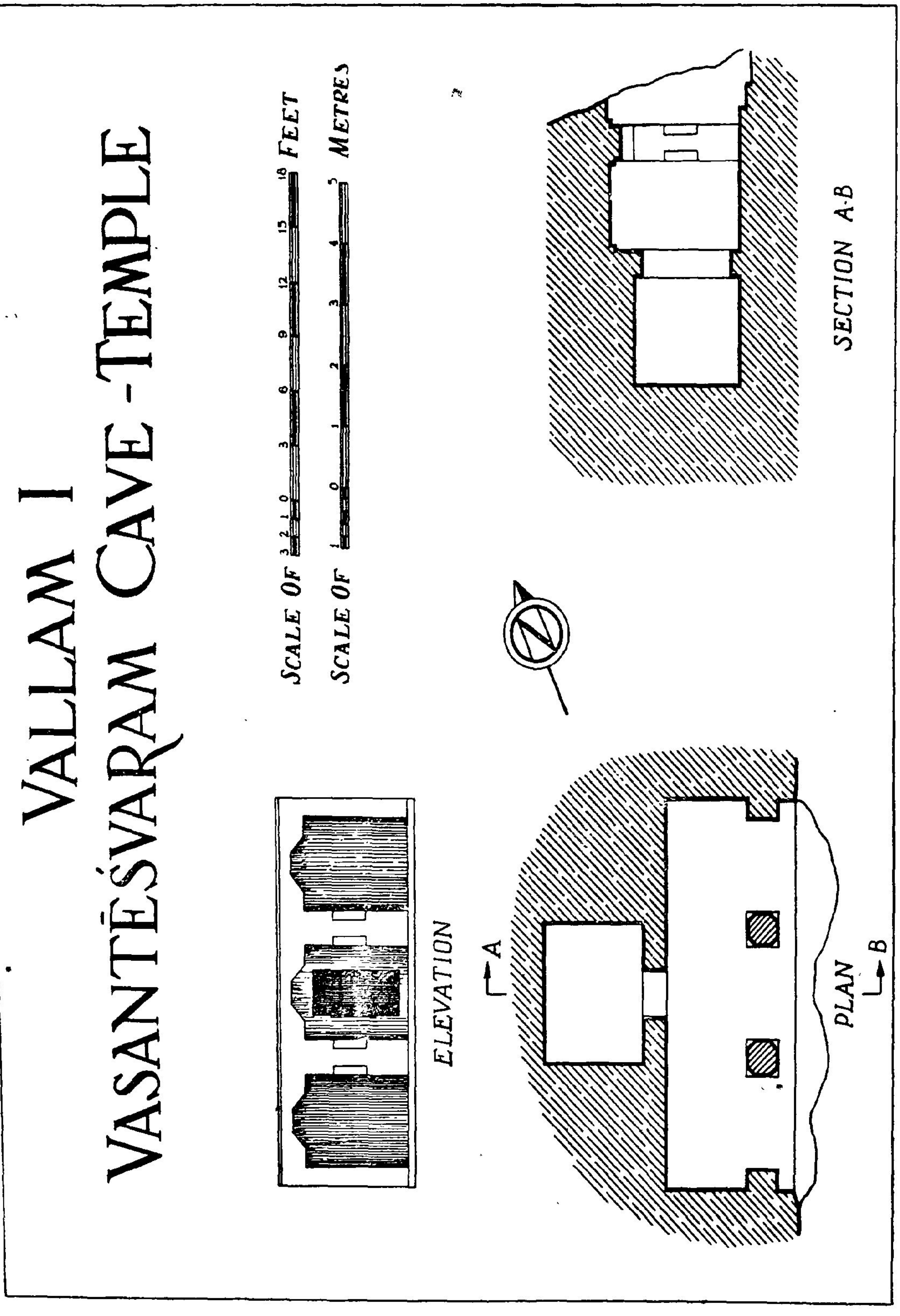
VALLAM I
VASANTĒŚVARAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF 3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 FEET
SCALE OF 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 METRES
ELEVATION
A
PLAN
B
SECTION A-B

Fig. 9

A. ON THE SOUTH PILLAR

1. *Pakāppiḍuku Laḷitāṅkuraṉ*

B. ON THE NORTH PILLAR

2. *Chatturuṁmallaṉ Kuṇaparaṉ*
3. *Mayēntirap-Pōttareśaru aḍiyāṉ*
4. *Vayantappiri areśaru makaṉ Kantasēna-*
5. *ṉ śeyivitta tēvakulam* [II*]

The third inscription is a later Tamil one of the fourteenth year of Kō-Peruñjingadēva (1179-80).[1] The first two inscriptions are in early Tamil script of the Pallava period and give clues to the date of the excavation of the temple. The later Tamil inscription calls it Vayandīśuram (Vasantēśvaram), evidently named after the father (Vasantapriyarāja) of the founder Skandasēna. The modern name of the god is Vēdāṅtēśvara.

The façade of the excavation is recessed by about 2 ft. into the slightly-sloping front face of the rock, so that there is a platform in front, which is slightly wider than the overhanging ledge on the top. The ledge is not finished into a *kapōta* with its ornamentation. The cave-temple consists of a cubical sanctum with an oblong *ardha-maṇḍapa* in front. The façade of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* has two massive pillars and two pilasters, which have, as usual, their bases and tops square in section, the intervening portion chamfered into an octagon. The front faces of the square sections (*śadurams*) contain the inscriptions. The pilasters correspond to the pillars in shape and dimension. The corbels on the top of the pillars and pilasters are massive. An examination of the four corbels from the inside, where alone they are partly exposed to view, would show that the tendency is more towards a curved than an angular profile. The entire façade is walled up with three modern door-openings; the central opening is further obscured by a relieved brick and stucco ornamental entrance (pl. XI B).

On the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and in its centre is excavated the entrance of the central shrine beyond which is cut the shrine-cell. Except for two shallow niches cut on either side of this entrance to the shrine-chamber, the rest of this wall and the whole of the side walls are plain. In the shallow niches are found two standing *dvāra-pālas* in semi-profile facing the shrine-entrance. They are almost identical in ornament and accoutrement but exhibit some differences in detail. Both rest on massive clubs, the southern one with his left hand and the northern one with his right for symmetry. The other hands of both are placed on the hip in the typical *kaṭi*-posture. The legs are crossed in both cases. Both wear *kirīṭa-makuṭas* with massive locks of *jaṭā* on either side of the face and heavy *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears. The southern figure has two curved horns projecting on either side from the base of the *makuṭa*, which indicate him to be a representation of Nandi as a *gaṇa*; the northern one has no horns. Again, the southern figure wears a *vastra-yajñōpavīta* in the normal *upavīta*-fashion, but the northern one has a *sarpa-yajñōpavīta* worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion. The northern one has on the top of his *jaṭā-makuṭa* in the centre what appears to be the front edge of a small *chakra*, which is absent in the southern one. Both have side tusks in their mouths.

The central shrine contains a *liṅga* erected on the floor. The *āvuḍaiyār*, in two pieces, has been slipped down from above, thus suggesting the addition of both at a later stage. The floor of the shrine-chamber is raised by about 1 ft. from the floor-level of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, and in front of its door-sill are cut two short steps, the lower one with an arched *chandra-śilā* devoid of any ornament. The shrine-walls of the interior, as also the ceiling, are plain. There are traces of old lime-plaster on the back wall of the shrine, which would indicate that it was originally painted.

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, II, pt. iii, no. 72, pp. 340-341.

On the top of the façade over the ledge is cut a series of mortise-holes to accommodate the joists of the terrace of a structural *maṇḍapa* in front and over the line of these holes is cut a chase, perhaps to secure a watertight bonding for the terrace with the vertical rock-surface.

Outside, on the rock-surface, flanking the excavation, at two different levels, are two niches, both oblong. The one on the south is cut rather deep and contains a fine relief of Gaṇēśa, seated on a *siṁhāsana*, the body, in slight profile, turned towards the shrine. The figure is four-armed; of the two upper arms, the object held by the right is broken and is indistinguishable, while the left holds a lotus-bud. The lower right arm is placed on the upraised right thigh, while the lower left rests on the pillow behind. The proboscis is coiled towards the right. Such *valampuri* Gaṇēśas are common in the south and are to be met with in Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiyar cave temples of the eighth-ninth centuries. The left tusk is broken. The *yajñōpavīta* is worn in the *nivīta*-fashion. On the whole, this is a very graceful form of the deity.

In contrast to this, the niche on the northern side is very shallow, with a low bas-relief sculpture of Jyēshṭhādēvī facing front. She is sitting with both the legs hanging down. The sculpture is very badly worn out; it is, therefore, difficult to judge the fineness of its original finish or the details of its features. The goddess, with a slim body, wears a heavy *jaṭābhāra* with a conical *makuṭa*. These two sculptures are not coeval with the cave they adjoin and, as in the two other simpler cave-temples, one below the Vasantēśvaram and another to its north (pp. 132-34), are later additions, though in the Pallava period itself. It is to be noted that the form of Gaṇēśa is not to be found among the numerous icons of the time of Mahēndra and Māmalla or his successors till the time of Rājasiṁha; the only instance of its occurrence, where it is not a special deity, is in the *bhūta* or *gaṇa* frieze below the *kapōta* on the façade of the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapa at Mahābalipuram (p. 176), where he is shown like any other *gaṇa* in the frieze as carrying a garland, with the difference that he has an elephant-head and occupies the central place in the line, perhaps indicating that he was the chief of the *gaṇas—Gaṇapati*. It is only in the later Pallava structural temples coeval with the Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍya cave-temples that Gaṇēśa is found and even there, as one of the deities of the *sapta-mātṛikā* group or as one of the subsidiary deities in the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. Jyēshṭhā likewise is not common in early Pallava sculpture, though in the eighth and ninth centuries she becomes common in the Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiyar areas. We have the instance of the excavation of a cave-temple for Jyēshṭhā at Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam, near Madurai, in the time of the Pāṇḍya king Śaḍaiyaṉ Māraṉ.[1] The Jyēshṭhā at Vallam has almost the same form as the one at that place.

Mahēndravāḍi: Mahēndra's Vishṇu cave-temple (fig. 10; pl. XII A)

Mahēndravāḍi, in Arkōnam Taluk of North Arcot District, is about 4 miles from Sholinghur Railway-station. The cave-temple here, called Mahēndra-Vishṇu-gṛiham in its inscription, is one of the few Vaishṇavite cave-temples of Mahēndra. It has been excavated almost at ground-level into a large free-standing boulder, about 16 ft. high and 25 ft. wide north-south. Its eastern face presented a natural vertical scarp with no need for any excavation into depth to prepare a vertical surface at the commencement of the excavation as in other cave-temples. This has resulted in the façade being almost flush with the eastern face of the rock. The excavation takes up a major portion of the length and depth of the rock leaving very little of the original rock on either side and behind,

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, XXII, p. 67; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, no. 37 of 1908; *South Indian Inscriptions*, XIV, no. 3.

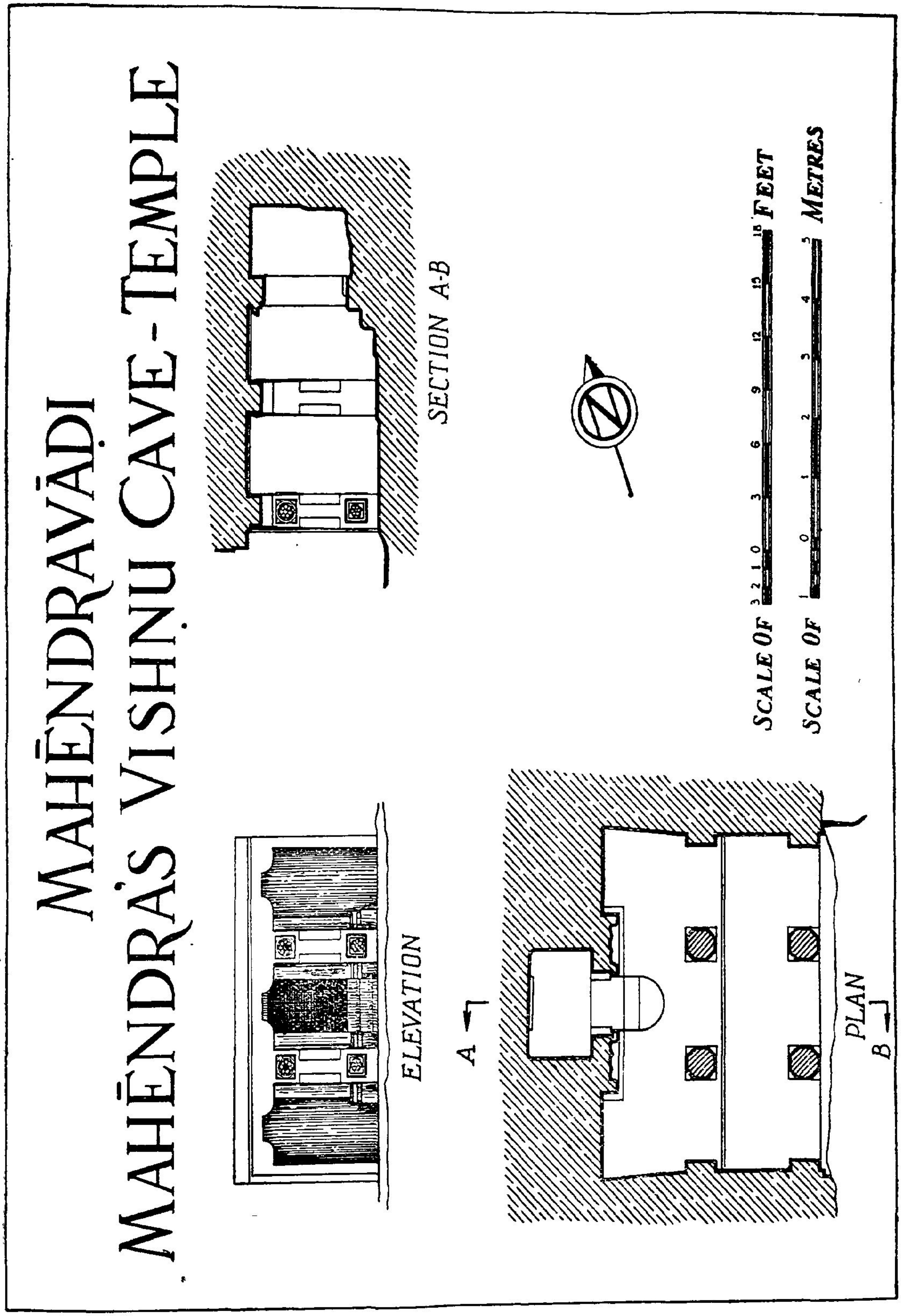
MAHĒNDRAVĀḌI
MAHĒNDRA'S VISHṆU CAVE-TEMPLE
ELEVATION
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES

FIG. 10

though on top over the façade there is about 8 ft. of original rock, which slopes behind, having well-marked vertical chisel-lines over a horizontal groove forming a chase or a drip-line. This was to block out the projecting rock on top of the façade into cubes and chisel off the portions so as to throw the top face well behind the line of the façade and thereby prevent much flow of water over the face of the excavation.

The façade of the cave consists of a row of two pillars and two pilasters, one at either extreme, cut about 4 in. behind the general surface of the rock on the northern side where the cutting shows as a single offset laterally since the rock turns behind at this point (pl. XIIA). On the southern side, however, there is almost a double offset since the rock-face is plane at this extreme. The two pillars of the façade are massive with cubical *śadurams* at the base and top, and octagonal *kaṭṭu* in between. The lower *śaduram*, curiously enough, is about 1 ft. 9 in. long, 1 ft. 9 in. wide and about 2 ft. 3 in. high, the extra 6 in. going to form the base of the pillar. The top *śadurams*, however, are quite cubical with 1 ft. 8 in. side, that is to say, they are slightly smaller than the lower ones in dimension. The intervening *kaṭṭu*, however, is of greater height, being nearly 2 ft. 6 in. Thus, the pillars do not present the squat and massive appearance as in many other caves. They were perhaps so designed since there was not much of rock on the top and the load to be carried or stress to be compensated was very little compared with other excavations at the bases of larger rocks carrying above them almost the entire load of the superimposed mass.

The two pilasters, one at either extreme, have a tetragonal section throughout and are not marked into the two *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*. While the top *śadurams* of both the pillars have lotus-medallions on all their four faces, the bottom ones have them only on three of their faces, front and lateral, the inner face being blank. Further, the upper lotuses, both on the pillars and pilasters, show a greater degree of finish than the bottom ones, e.g., the one on the southern face of the lower *śaduram* of the northern pillar is hardly more than a line-sketch. The circular lotus-medallions are each placed inside a square, the triangular spandrel-like corners between the square and the inscribed circle being filled with scroll-work. The top inner face of the two pilasters *in antis*, coming opposite the adjacent pillars, has fully finished lotus-medallions inside full squares, while their front faces show only halves of the squares with semi-circles inside, the other half meant to have been merged laterally into the rock. It is below the lotus-medallion of the southern pillar that we have the four-line Pallava-Grantha inscription of Guṇabhara in Sanskrit. It is a single verse in the *kōkilaka* metre, each *pāda* of which occupies a separate line. It states that Guṇabhara made this excellent abode of Murāri called the *Vishṇu-gṛiha* of Mahēndra, which was pleasing to the eyes of the people, on this rock on the bank of the Mahēndra-*taṭāka* in Mahēndrapura. It reads:

1 *Mahitatamaṁ satām=u*[*pa*]*-Mahēndra-*[*ta*]*ṭākam=i*[*daṁ*](*daṁ*)

2 *sthiram=uru kāritaṁ Guṇabharēṇa vidāryya śil*[*ām*] [I*]

3 *ja*[*na*]*-nayan-ābhirāma-guṇa-dhāma Mahēndra-purē*

4 *maha*[*ti*] *Mahēndra-Vishṇu-gṛiha-nāma Murā*[*rī*]*-gṛi*[*haṁ*] [II*]

and is translated as:

"Splitting the rock Guṇabhara caused to be made on (the bank of) Mahēndra taṭāka in the great (city of) Mahēndrapura this solid spacious temple of Murāri, named Mahēndravishṇugṛiha, which is highly praised by good people (and which is) an abode of beauty pleasing the eyes of men."[1]

Behind the façade is excavated an oblong verandah with an inner row of two pillars and two pilasters dividing it into an outer *mukha-maṇḍapa* and an inner *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, pp. 152-53.

pillars and pilasters are quite like those on the façade, but none of them contains the lotus-medallion on any face. All these pillars and pilasters of the façade as well as the inner row carry massive corbels or *pōtikās* with a curved profile and without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation. On the beam over the pillars of the façade there is a small *vājana*-course and above it the overhanging rock has not been finished into a *kapōta*. This could not also be done since the natural face of the rock is slightly curved from side to side, so that the projection at the centre is greater than at the ends where it almost merges with the thickness of the *vājana*.

Inside, the ceiling of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* is finished over a projecting *vājana*-moulding running all round. The two end walls of this *mukha-maṇḍapa* are plain. The ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* too shows the supporting *vājana*-moulding interrupted only on the western side by the length of the projecting shrine-front of the cella or *garbha-gṛiha*. The lateral as well as the hind walls of this *ardha-maṇḍapa*, visible on either side of the shrine projection, are also plain. The floor-levels of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and *mukha-maṇḍapa* are, however, differentiated, that of the latter being about 2 in. lower than that of the former, the step coming down at the front basal line of the inner row of pillars and pilasters, thus corresponding to the projection of the *vājana* above on the ceiling.

The shrine excavated behind the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is cut projecting about 1 ft. 3 in. into the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, itself being 11 ft. in length, thus leaving 3½ ft. on either side as recesses, which form the exposed back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The shrine-projection is provided with a fairly well-marked *adhishṭhāna* where the *kumuda* has not been differentiated from the *upāna*, though an attempt to cut the *kumuda* is seen at the northern extremity. Over this is the recessed *kanṭha* with a projecting *paṭṭikā* above. These mouldings are interrupted in the middle by the base of the oblong opening of the shrine-entrance and the rock-cut *sōpāna* in front of it. The sill of the opening coincides with the top of the *kumuda*-moulding and forms the top step of the *sōpāna*. Below this are cut two more steps, the upper one oblong and the lower one a semi-circular *chandra-śilā*. The shrine-entrance is devoid of regularly demarcated jambs and lintels but is flanked by plain pilasters, which are not also differentiated into the shaft- and capital-components. On either side of the shrine-entrance are sunk two shallow niches bounded at the two extremes by similar cantoning pilasters. These niches contain *dvāra-pālas* in almost identical pose facing front, their left hands in *kaṭi* and the right pointing towards the shrine. They wear *nīvīta-yajñōpavītas*, enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas* and what apear to be *karaṇḍa-makuṭas*. On the top of this projecting shrine-entrance running over the pilasters is a beam and *vājana*-moulding with a projecting curved *kapōta* above. This *kapōta* is not undercut, but externally the curvature has been finished, though there are no *kūḍu*-arches. All the mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna* as well as the *kapōta* on the top turn in at the corners to meet the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The *garbha-gṛiha* is oblong and its back-wall is finished with an oblong base at the bottom projecting about 3 in. from the general surface and having a height of about 1½ ft. The plain dressed wall above this relieved plinth shows fragments of old plaster with painting. Evidently, the original deity (Vishṇu) that was consecrated was a painting on the back wall. The projecting lower plinth at the bottom was perhaps decorated into a moulded plinth with stucco. In later times, a stone image of Nṛisiṁha was placed in the centre of the shrine-cell. This has been subsequently mutilated and repaired in almost modern stucco. Even the stucco image is now badly broken.

Māmaṇḍūr I: northern cave-temple (fig. 11; pl. XII B)

This cave-temple, definitely attributable to Mahēndra from an inscription of Mahēndra in it, is the northernmost of the series of finished and unfinished cave-temples in the twin villages of Māmaṇḍūr and Narasapāḷaiyam and almost adjoins the larger

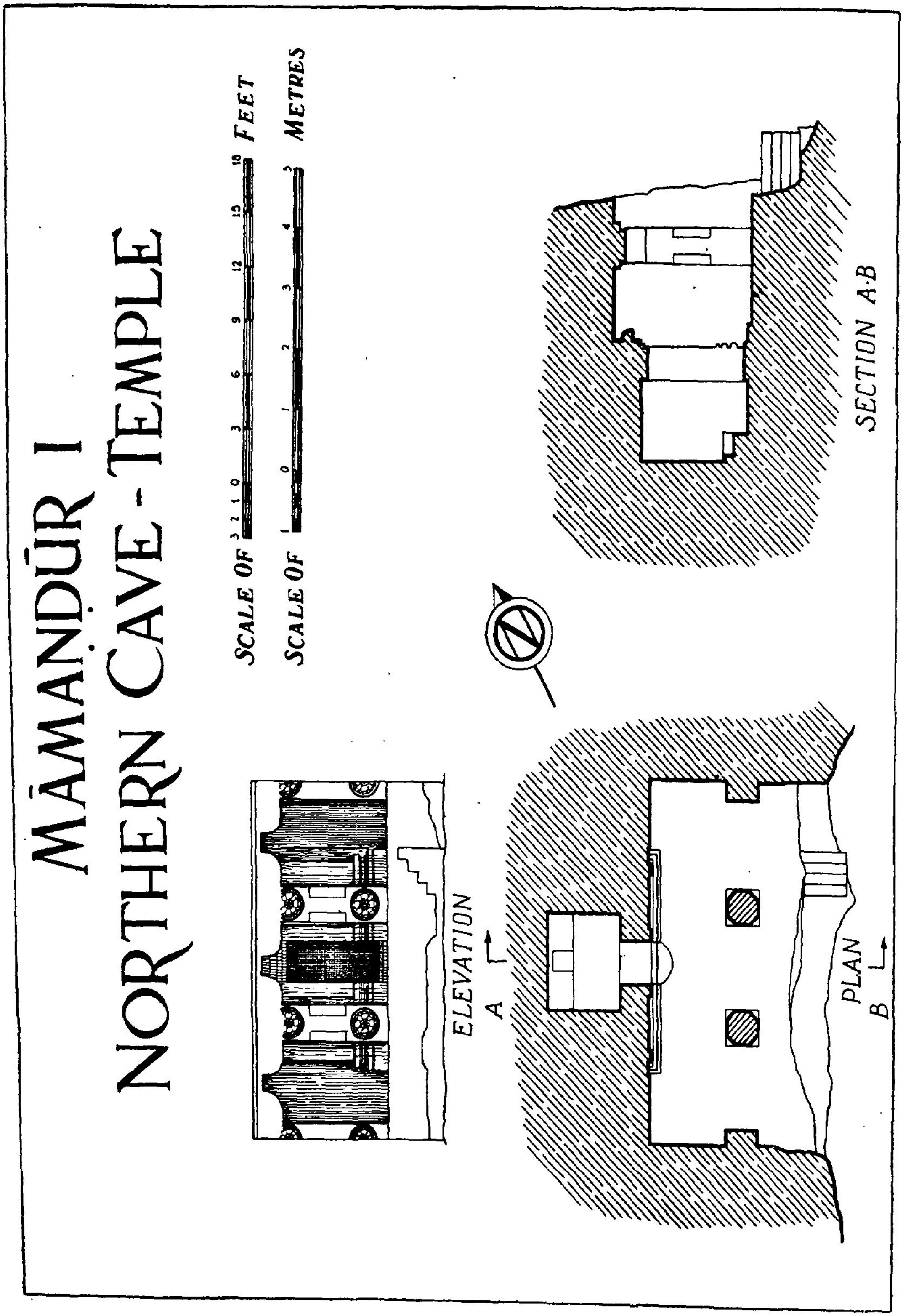
MĀMANḌŪR I
NORTHERN CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
ELEVATION
PLAN
SECTION A·B
A
B

FIG. 11

triple-celled cave-temple, Māmaṇḍūr II, already described (pp. 54-59). It occupies almost the vertical face of the rock to the north of the earlier cave-temple, which could not perhaps be cut here owing to its large size necessitating its location a little south, even though the rock-face was more sloping and hence requiring a deeper cutting-in for obtaining a scarp of the desired width and height. The region with the more vertical scarp could, however, be chosen for the excavation of a smaller cave-temple like the present one, subsequently. That both of them were not excavated simultaneously would be clear from the differences noticed in the pillars, particularly from the lotus-medallions on the pillars of the façade of the smaller cave and the absence of the *dvāra-pālas*. In the type and decoration of pillars, in the shape of corbels which do not have the *taraṅga*-ornament, in the type of pilasters and on general plan, this cave-temple resembles that of Vishṇu at Mahēndravāḍi (pp. 64-67) except that the *dvāra-pālas* flanking the shrine-entrance of the latter are absent here.

This cave-temple has an oblong *ardha-maṇḍapa* and a shrine behind, facing east (pl. XII B). The natural scarp of the rock being vertical, the cutting-in of the face in order to prepare a vertical scarp with provision for the overhanging *kapōta* on the top and a basement below has not been very deep. It is about 2½ ft. deep below and about a foot on the top. The actual cutting of the base-line of the excavation is raised at a height of 4 ft. from the ground-level in front of the almost vertical and large rock. The façade has two massive pillars with two pilasters, one at either end, the pillars being differentiated into three regions from base to top as a square *śaduram* below, octagonal *kaṭṭu* in the middle and again a square *śaduram* on top. The lower *śaduram* has a height greater than its sides, the extra height of 6 in. accounting for the height of the pedestal of the pillar deducting which the height and sides of the cubical *śaduram* would be uniformly 2 ft. The height of the *kaṭṭu* is 2 ft. 3 in., which is equal to half the total length of the corbel on the top. The top *śaduram* is unusually disproportionate, being about only 1 ft. 3 in. high, while its average width is slightly less than 2 ft. The four sides of the lower *śadurams* are decorated by square plaques containing full-blown lotus-medallions engraved inside. The height of the top *śaduram* being slightly less than that of the lower *śaduram*, the circular lotus-medallion forms only a major arc of a circle incomplete on top, looking as if the top of the pillar had to be sawn off for placing the corbel. These circular medallions are carved on the front and side faces of the basal and terminal *śadurams* and not on the hind faces. The pilasters *in antis* at either extreme are four-sided on plan throughout without the intervening *kaṭṭu*, with partial lotus-medallions on the front faces and fuller ones on their exposed side faces, the hind faces being without any. Corresponding to what obtains in the pillars, the lower lotus-medallions on the exposed lateral faces are complete, the upper ones incomplete. The *pōtikā* cut on top of the pillars and pilasters is large and massive with a definite curved profile without *taraṅga*-ornaments, of the same width as the top of the pillars and of length equal to thrice the width of the top of the pillars. In the case of the pilasters, inasmuch as only one half of the corbel is shown, the measurements are halved. Thus, between the pillars and pilasters are formed three equal bays, on the tops of which the adjoining corbel-blocks almost meet, leaving a space of about 10 in. between each, which is really the exposed underside of the beam. The beam above the corbels is of the same thickness and width as the corbels themselves. In front, on the top of the beam is a small projecting planking course, a moulding with angular sides, the *vājana*. Though some provision has been made for the *kapōta*, the outer surface of the rock, which is irregular, has not been trimmed into a curved moulding, whereas the undersurface has been almost levelled up but not scooped in. There are traces of old plaster and paint on the undersurface of the *kapōta* as also on the top of the corbels. The painting shows circular lotus-medallions against a red background simulating a carpet-canopy stretched under the ceiling as in Śittaṇṇavāśal and other cave-temples. The

paintings on top of the pillars and corbels show alternate red and green bands; the details inside them are lost. Likewise, the engraving of the top lotus-medallions of the pillars appear to have been embellished with very thin coloured stucco.

The floor and ceiling of the verandah inside are finished, the ceiling with a *vājana*-course projected on the top of the front beam inside as it does outside. This moulding is taken round the other three sides over the *maṇḍapa*-walls. On the southern wall of the *maṇḍapa* is the famous Pallava-Grantha inscription attributed to Mahendravarman I.[1] This long inscription occupying the entire wall-sapce, though much damaged, mentions the composition of a play, the *Mattavilāsa-prahasana* and gives also the other titles of Mahendra-*Śatrumalla*, *Nityavinīta* and *Satyasandha*. The work referred to has fortunately been discovered and from its contents its authorship by Mahēndra Pallava of Kāñchi, son of Siṁhavishṇu, is confirmed. The same work mentions the title of *Śatrumalla* in the concluding part of the play; *Avanibhājana* is mentioned in the fourth *pāda* of the *maṅgala-ślōka* and *Guṇabhara* and *Mattavilāsa* are mentioned by the *naṭī* in the *sthāpana*.

On the back wall of the *maṇḍapa* is cut a slightly projecting shrine-front, the projection being about a foot in front of the general line of the back wall visible on either side of the shrine front. These two surfaces of the back wall as also the two side walls of the *maṇḍapa*, except for the long Pallava-Grantha inscription on the southern side, are blank, though on the northern side, there are traces here and there of thin painted plaster.

The shrine-front has a moulded *adhishṭhāna* cut at its base, the *jagatī* rising directly from the floor of the *maṇḍapa* in front (perhaps the *upāna* was not intended to be cut). Over the *jagatī* is a *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, a *kaṇṭha* with two *kampa*-courses, one above and one below it, with a *paṭṭikā* and *prati* on the top. The *kaṇṭha* has the usual reliefs at places coming below the pilasters rising on top of the thin *prati*.

There are four pilasters on the shrine-front, two at the ends cantoning the corners and two on either side of the shrine-entrance and very slightly relieved from the wall surface in between. The four pilasters are uniform throughout having a tetragonal section. On the sides, where the two pilasters extend over the inturning corners, the faint lines marking off the pilaster have not even been cut. There are no capitals on the top of the pilasters, not even *pōtikās*. On the top is run a thin *uttira*-course with another small convex course, which is really a plain *valabhī*, both the *uttira* and *valabhī* as well as the prominently-projecting *kapōta* on the top turning round at the corners, as the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings do below, to meet the hind walls of the *maṇḍapa* behind. The shrine-entrance is cut between the two inner pilasters, the pilasters thus forming the jambs and the thin beam on top the lintel. In front, projecting beyond the *adhishṭhāna* and raised above the level of the floor of the verandah is a semi-circular *chandra-śilā* step. The sill level at the lower part of the shrine-entrance, peculiarly, cuts through the *adhishṭhāna* down to the top of the *jagatī*, leaving a portion of the rock of the thickness of the *jagatī* to form the sill or the step over the *chandra-śilā*.

The cell or *garbha-gṛiha* inside is oblong; in front of its back wall is a rock-cut plain platform extending from end to end and projecting forward to almost the middle line of the floor. The back and side walls of the shrine-cell contain traces of painted stucco much discoloured by bat nuisance. Evidently, this platform and the space of the wall

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 136; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, no. 58 of 1888. While this long inscription, which is unfortunately damaged in many places, has been noticed and its text published, a small inscription in one line in late Grantha characters at the base of the rock-cutting, just immediately in front of the southern pilaster, which reads *pa-sa-sa-sa-da-sa*, perhaps indicating the *ārōhaṇa-* and *avarōhaṇa-svaras* of a *rāga*, seems to have been left unnoticed.

above were intended for a stucco image or a painted plaque of the principal deity, in which case the platform would form a *pīṭha* decorated by coloured stucco. An asymmetrical square pit, with the front side open, has been cut in this platform, but which could not have been an original feature. There is no other pit in the centre of the floor for the accommodation of a *liṅga* or a sculpture of Śiva or Vishṇu. The wall-surface between the pilasters of the shrine projection also show traces of thin plaster with faded green colours here and there. There is no definite extant indication to show that this cave-shrine was dedicated to Vishṇu in preference to other deities. There are no *dvāra-pālas* in this cave either. But the suggestion that it could have been a Vishṇu cave-temple is supported by the fact that this resembles the Mahēndravādi (Vishṇu) cave-temple (pp. 64-67) on plan and by what can be made out from the last two lines of the mutilated inscription inside, which may be read as follows:

16 *yīshu paraṁ prīti panta........sya vapushaḥ* ॥ ....*Nityavinītēna Satya-saṁ[dhēna*]........sya bhaktyā-varjjita-mauḷinā*

17 *sahasra [dhā?]rā-sampūrṇṇa-mēgha-śyāmasya garji[ta]..........kshi..........* *pati.vattayā........*(II*)

While line 16 refers to Mahēndra (*Nityavīnīta, Satyasandha* etc.) as a great devotee (*bhaktyā-varjjita-mauḷinā*), line 17 apparently suggests the form of Vishṇu (*mēgha-śyāma*—coloured like the cloud pregnant with thousand torrents—*sahasradhārā-sāmpūrṇa*) as Narasiṁha (as implied by the term *garjita*—roaring).

Daḷavāṉūr-Śatrumalla's cave-temple (fig. 12; pls. XIII-XVI)

The almost-finished cave-temple at Daḷavāṉūr, in Gingee Taluk, South Arcot District, is a very interesting early Pallava example. The excavation is on the southern scarp of the huge rock running east-west. Above the excavation, at a height of about 80 ft. from ground-level, is a shelter (natural but for two beds, presumably of Jaina origin, cut into it), formed by an overhanging boulder which is reached by a flight of small steps cut over the eastern slope of the rock. This shelter has lent the names Pañchapāṇḍava-malai to the hill and Pañchapāṇḍava cave to the cave-temple. Such an association of natural caverns or rock-shelters with beds and purposefully-excavated cave-temples dedicated to one or more of the Hindu gods on the same rock has been explained before (p. 31).

For the excavation of this cave-temple with its façade, there was no need to cut back from the natural surface of the rock till a convenient vertical surface could be reached, for the close and fine-grained rocks in the area have generally an almost vertical natural cleavage. In this particular instance, the eastern end of a sloping hillock, where its south face has a very perpendicular escarpment, was chosen. The excavation and the carving of the details of the façade have, therefore, started almost straight from the natural rock-face with practically very little preparation of the surface. Owing to the presence of many huge free boulders on the top of this hillock, some rising to a height of 30 ft. or more, the spot for the excavation was chosen more towards the eastern end, where the top of the hillock is low and comparatively free from the superincumbent weight of large boulders (pl. XIII A). In fact, the spot of the excavation is the scarp vertically below a length of the top-line of rock lying between the bases of two very large free boulders perched on the hill-top. The idea obviously was to minimize the crushing load on the top, which would otherwise result in damages to the supporting columns after the scooping away of a large

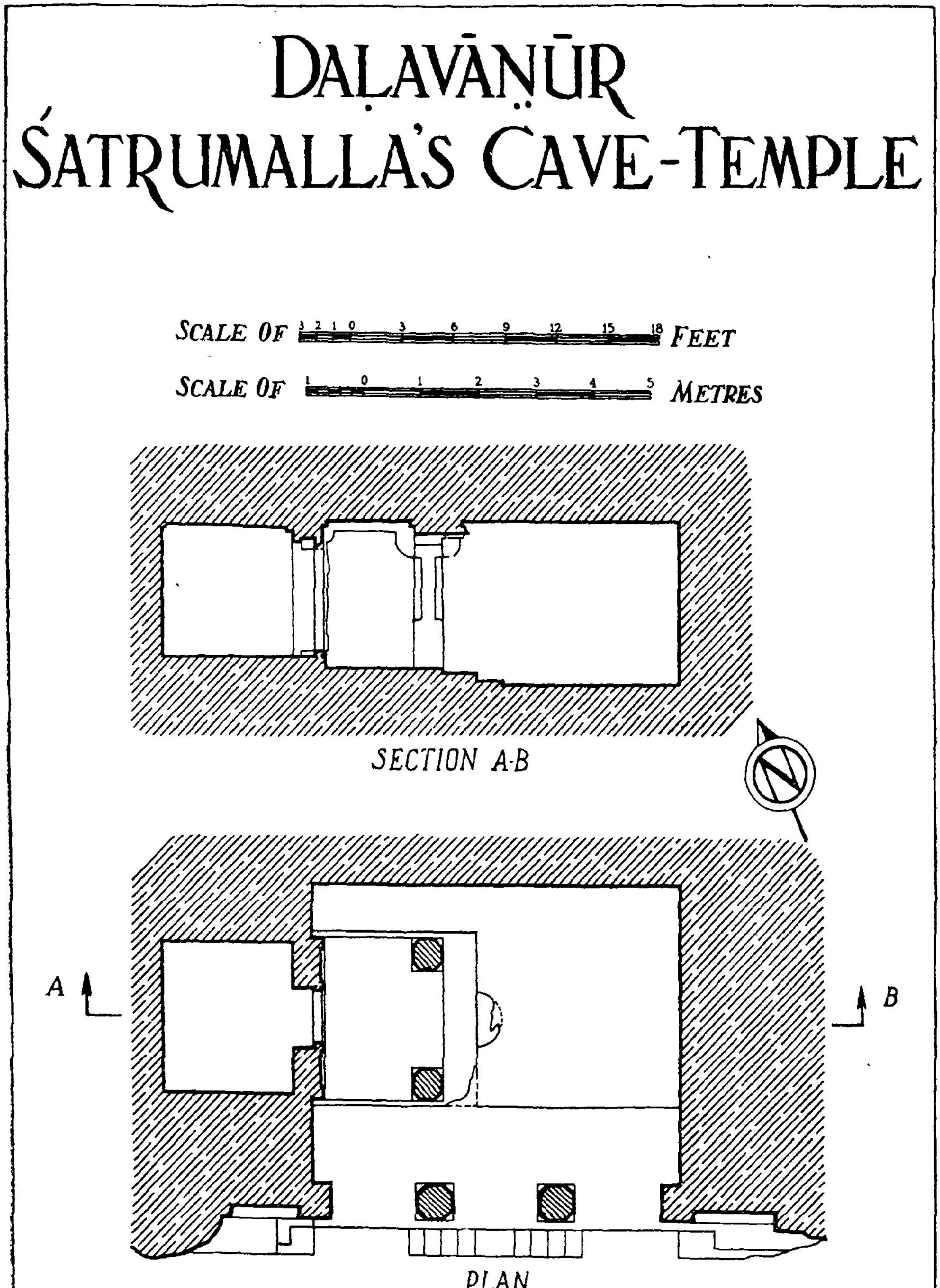
DALAVĀNŪR
ŚATRUMALLA'S CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
SECTION A-B
A
B
PLAN

FIG. 12

mass of rock from near the base.[1] This is a very good instance to illustrate how carefully the excavators chose the location and design of their cave-temples.

The length of the excavation (pls. XIIIB and XIV) from east-west, including the two *dvāra-pāla*-niches at either end, is 32 ft. and the height at which the excavation starts from the ground-level is 3½ ft. Excluding the two niches(6¾ ft. high and 4¾ ft. wide), which are about 1½ ft. deep from the surface, the length of the façade, which shows two pillars (width of each about 2 ft.) and two pilasters *in antis*, is about 23 ft. The pillars and pilasters are cut on top and a little behind the edge of the platform which is a moulded plinth or *adhishṭhāna*, consisting of the *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, *kampa*, *kaṇṭha*, a second *kampa* and *paṭṭikā*, the total height being 3¼ ft. The *adhishṭhāna*-line is recessed well behind the general plane of the rock-face, leaving a bit of the original rock in front for the *sōpāna*, which consists of two lateral flights of four steps, each with a small landing on the top, the space occupied by the whole system being equal to the distance between the two outer edges of the central pillars of the façade. Each rock-cut step of the *sōpāna* is about 9 in. in length and perhaps the rest of it in front was built up with a facing parapet-slab[2].

On the tops of the corbels, the architrave or *prastara* portion is very artistically finished. It consists of a curved *kapōta* with five well-formed *kūḍu*-arches with *gandharva*-faces inside, the outer line of the *kapōta* almost flush with the general line of the natural scarp, showing that it was carved almost into the original rock-face. The arms of the arches of the *kūḍus* as well as the shovel-shaped finials (*śakti-dvajas*) are elaborately carved with scroll-work. Each *kūḍu*-arch is a miniature *nāsikā* formed by two *tōraṇas*, the flourishes of the arches being the foliate tails of two outwardly-facing *makaras* at the base of the horse-shoe, one on either side, meeting at the apex below the shovel-finial. Inside, the creepers of the arch are rows of rosettes, the whole framing a small human head. Over the line of this *kapōta* are the two plainer mouldings, the *āliṅga* and *antarī*, simulating the members of the terrace and showing the ends of cross-joists.

The two pilasters at either end have their front and inner flanks prominently cut out, presenting the aspect of almost full pillars externally though not divided into the *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*, thus, unlike the central pillars, having a square section from base to top. They also lack the lotus-medallion ornamentation. The two pillars in the middle are the most ornate. They are differentiated into *śadurams* above and below with an intervening octagonal *kaṭṭu*. The faces of the *śadurams*, basal and terminal, contain on all the sides deeply-carved lotus-medallions, which consist of circular full-blossomed lotuses with three seriate petals, the two outer expanding and the inner infolding on a central circular torus, the whole design bounded on the outside by a chaplet of beads enclosed between two embossed circles. Unlike other examples, the entire circular motif is not included within a square with floral work at the four corners. Such lotus-medallions are found without exception on all the four faces of the top and bottom *śadurams*. The bottom *śaduram* has a slightly greater height than the top one, this being due to the added height of the base of the pillar.

On the top of the pillars is a slightly wider *phalaka* projecting on all the four sides with its edges decorated with lotus-petals forming the lower *padma* part, the upper

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[1] In fact, what the excavator feared has almost happened in spite of his very careful choice of the place of excavation. The pillars and pilasters of the façade have cracked along a natural faultline sloping down from the west to the east, still visible as a line on the back of the cave-temple. This crushing strain has further cracked the tops and bottoms of the pillars, the cracks occurring along the lines of weakness in the material of the rock.

[2] This has since been altered by the provision of stone steps in front.

portion being a plain plank or *phalaka*. It is on this plank that the corbels are mounted. The presence of this member would show that the upper *śaduram* on which it is cut has taken the place of the usual capital-members of the normal pillar coming below the *phalaka* and *padma* or *pāli*. This *phalaka* is not evident in the case of the two pilasters on either side.

The corbels over the pillars and pilasters are of the plain massive type with curved profile without any *taraṅga*-ornamentation or median *paṭṭa*. On the front corbel-face of each of the pillars is an elaborately worked-out *makara* facing inwards with a *gaṇa* riding and from the mouths of either issues a dense foliage in volutes, again to merge into the mouths of two small addorsed *makaras* facing out, in the centre of the bay in the place of a *lalāṭa-bimba*. Between the two upraised probosces of the central *makaras* sits another *gaṇa*, below which, supporting the addorsed heads of the *makaras* or *lalāṭa-bimba*, is a pendantive *padma*-base.

This elaborate but straightened *makara-tōraṇa*, spanning the central opening, adds much to the beauty of this picturesquely-situated cave-temple. Thus, in design and effect, the main entrance between the two pillars is a *stāmbha-tōraṇa*: the corbels, because of the *makara*-carvings on them, would be *chitra-pōtikās* or *makara-potikās*, and the *tōraṇa* is a typical *makara-tōraṇa* of the Pallava period. This would also indicate that the central opening or bay between the central pillars is of the nature of a *toraṇa*-entrance, a feature not found in any other cave-temple.

On the top of the *pōtikās* of the pillars and pilasters and even extending beyond to terminate on the tops of two unfinished quarter pilasters, one at each extremity on the outer side of the *dvāra-pāla* niche on the western and eastern flanks of the façade, is an *uttira*. Over the *uttira* is a *vājana*- and *valabhī*-course, the *valabhī* being a convex moulding without a *haṁsa*- or *vyāla*-frieze. The *kapōta* is cut on the top of the *valabhī* as a projecting moulding with a curved outer surface and with its ventral surface not undercut but finished even. Curiously enough, the *kapōta* as well as the *valabhī* and *vājana* below it do not extend at either end over the unfinished corbels of the outer pilasters flanking the two *dvāra-pāla* niches. In fact, the outer arms of the corbels of the main pilasters of the cave-temple entrance, which form the inner boundaries of the *dvāra-pāla* niches on each side, are not in full form with the angular profile as also the inward projecting corbel-arms of the extreme unfinished pilasters bounding the niches on the outside.

The originally-intended width of the façade is marked by the extent of the *kapōta* between its inturning ends. As it is, the *kapōta* does not extend beyond the outermost pilasters flanking the niches. Perhaps, this would indicate that the *dvāra-pāla* niches were the result of an afterthought. This will be confirmed by the fact that the *āliṅgana*- and *antarī*-mouldings over the *kapōta*, as also the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings at the base, do not reach up to these niches. The disposition of the *kūḍus* is also slightly irregular, except the central *kūḍu*-arch, which comes directly over the central line of the *makara-tōraṇa* and, as such, is centrally disposed between the two main pillars, the four others being rather irregularly-placed in relation to pillars and pilasters and their corbels below. Each of the *kūḍu*-arches coming on either side of the central one does not correspond to the centre of the bays of that side but is placed closer to the outer corbel arm of the main pillars. Similarly, the two extreme *kūḍu*-arches do not come right over the central line of the *dvāra-pāla* niches but are placed closer to the pilasters of the cave-temple; in fact, they come almost over the outer corbel-arm of the eastern and western pilasters. The five heads of *gandharvas*, inside the five *kūḍu*-arches differ in their head-dress and ornamentation.

The two *dvāra-pālas* flanking the façade (pl. XV) have more or less the same dress and ornamentation. They wear heavy *jaṭā-bhāras*, hanging like cushions on either side

of the head, and a turban showing three twisted rolls, one above the other, with circular ornaments attached in front and on the sides. The head-dress of the eastern *dvāra-pāla* is slightly different from that of the western one, in that the three folds of the turban are not visible and the disposition of the circular ornaments attached to the turban is different. The western *dvāra-pāla* faces front and stands in *tribhaṅga* without any club. His left arm is lifted up in adoration, while the right is in *kaṭi*, The eastern one is in semi-profile, face turned front, leaning forward with his right leg bent at the knee and left planted straight, his whole weight resting on the top of the club stuck into his right arm-pit. His right arm is hanging loose, while the left is in *kaṭi*. Both wear *vastra-yajñōpavītas* in the ordinary *upavīta*-fashion and their wrists and arms are adorned by *valayas* and coiled bracelets. Both of them again wear the *vastra* up to the knee, thrown into folds and tucked between the legs and secured at the waist by a sash with ends hanging in two tassels. In addition, there is another loose folded cloth wound round the waist.

The façade leads into an oblong *maṇḍapa*, 21 ft. 3 in. ×16 ft. 6 in., excluding the width of the pillars. Its inner walls are plain. It is on the western wall of this *maṇḍapa* that the shrine-chamber, with a pillared porch 8½ ft. square projecting into the *maṇḍapa*, has been cut (pl. XVI). This porch has got two front pillars with a slight taper from base to top, the lower one-third being square (*śaduram*), the rest octagonal with cross-corbels on the top. Each of the four arms of the corbel is of the plain type with a sharply-curved profile. Corresponding to these are two pilasters on either side of the shrine-entrance. The pilasters are plain with a uniform tetragonal section, and the corbels are of the same type as those over the front pillars of the porch. Over the corbels of the pillars and pilasters are longitudinal and cross-beams cut as if to support of the roof of the porch. Over the beams runs the *vājana*-course carrying the ceiling inside and externally a projecting curved *kapōta*. The underside of the *kapōta* has not been scooped in, but is finished plain. This *kapōta* is devoid of the *kūḍu*-arch or any other ornamentation.

The almost-finished ceiling of the main *maṇḍapa*, which comes over the *kapōta*-level, of the porch, rests on a *vājana*-moulding, which runs all round on the top of the pillars and pilasters of the façade on the south and over the walls on the other three sides. The entire porch stands over a rough *adhishṭhāna*, about a foot high without any mouldings, and its front is provided with a *chandra-śilā* cut on the floor of the *maṇḍapa*; both the floors of the porch and *maṇḍapa* are well-finished. The floor of the main *maṇḍapa*, however, is cut in two levels the part immediately behind the pillars and pilasters of the façade, running the whole length east-west, being at a lower level than the rest immediately in front of the *chandraśilā* of the pillared porch and between it and the back wall. Thus, in spite of the absence of an internal parallel row of pillars, there is a demarcation of the main *maṇḍapa* into an outer *mukha*- and inner *ardha-maṇḍapas*, the porch itself forming the third or *antarāla-maṇḍapa*.

The opening of the shrine-entrance cut into the wall behind the porch measures 5 ft. 6 in.×2 ft. 9 in. On either side of this opening and between the jamb and the pilaster is a shallow niche, each accommodating a *dvāra-pāla* of exactly similar pose, with the outer hand in *kaṭi* and the inner raised in the pose of adoration. The *dvāra-pālas*, who flank the shrine-entrance, are smaller in size but are better finished than the ones flanking the façade (pls. XV C and D). Both of them wear *jaṭā-makuṭas* with prominent *jaṭā-bhāra* on either side of the head below the *makuṭa*, enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas*, *hāras* round the neck, *yajñōpavītas* in the *upavīta*-fashion, *valayas* and bracelets round the wrists and upper arms and *udara-bandhas* and *kaṭi-bandhas*, the latter hanging down as full tassels. The details of the *kaṭi*- and *udara-bandhas* of the southern *dvārā-pāla* are finished, whereas those

of the northern one are hardly even picked out. Both of them have their heads slightly tilted towards the shrine-entrance.

The interior of the shrine-chamber measures 8 ft. square. The cylindrical *liṅga* and its circular *pīṭha* in the centre are separate pieces and are not hewn out of the rock.

There are three inscriptions, one on the southern face of the western pilaster of the façade next to the upraised arm of the western *dvāra-pāla*, another on the southern and eastern faces of the lower *śaduram* of the southern pillar of the shrine-porch inside and a third on the western face of the eastern pilaster. The first is a Sanskrit inscription in Pallava-Grantha and mentions that the cave-temple on the hill was caused to be made by king *Narēndra* (*alias* Śatrumalla) and was named *Śatrumallēśvarālaya*, 'the abode of the lord (*īśa*) of Śatrumalla'. It reads:

1 *Daṇḍ–ānata–narēndrēṇa*
2 *narēndrēṇ=aisha kāritaḥ* [|*]
3 *Śatrumallēna śailē=smin*(*smiñ=*)
4 *Śatrumallēśvar–ālaya*[*ḥ*] [||*]

The second inscription is an exact rendering of the same in Tamil script and verse and, in addition, mentions the name of the person (Śellan Śivadāsan) who composed the Tamil verse. It reads:

FIRST SECTION

1 *Śrī*[||*] *Toṇḍaiyan–tār–*
2 *vēndaṉ Narēndira–*
3 *ppōttaraiyaṉ Ve–*
4 *ṉbēṭṭiṉ=ṟeṉb*[*ā*]–
5 *l miga magiḻndu ka–*
6 [*ṇḍāṉ*] *śara–mikka–ve–*
7 *ñ-jilaiyāṉ Śa–*
8 *ttrumallēśva–*
9 *rālayam=eṉṟ=Ara–*
10 *ṉukk=iḍam=āgav=aṅgu* [||*]

SECOND SECTION

11 *Ivv-ūr* [*B*]*ram–*
12 *mamaṅgalavaṉ*
13 *Śellaṉ Śivadā–*
14 *san śolliya–*
15 *du* [||*]

The third is a later Pallava inscription of Nandivarman, also in Tamil.[2]

Attempts have been made to fix the authorship of the cave by the surname *Śatrumalla* known to be one of the many surnames of Mahēndravarman I, and on the assumption that *Narēndra* was also one of the *birudas* of Mahēndravarmaṉ. Hultzsch, while editing the inscriptions, stated that Mahēndravarman had the title of *Śatrumalla* and according to the present inscription he had also the *biruda* Narēndra, which he equates with Mahēndra.

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[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, XII, pp. 225-26.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 52.

Narēndra, however, is a title found here for the first time and not anywhere else in the gamut of the *birudas* of Mahēndra known from the cave-temples or even of Māmalla. Venkatasubba Aiyar also points out that the Vāyalur inscription gives the epithet Narēndra-siṁha to Rājasiṁha, but concludes by saying ' that the simpler and earlier style of the Daḷavāṇūr temple, however, precludes its assignment to the time of this king.'[1] He also states in connexion with the Tamil inscription that Narēndrapōttaraiyan excavated to the south of Veṇbēḍu a Śiva temple called *Śatrumalleśvarālaya.*[2] He further states the following in respect of the palaeography of the inscription: ' It may be noted that the Tamil characters in which this inscription is engraved are not so archaic as to be attributed to the period of Mahēndravarman, but could be assigned to the 9th century A.D. It is, therefore, probable that this Tamil translation in verse of the previous record was composed by a local poet of the 9th century and was got engraved.' The original editor of the inscription, Hultzsch, however, has made a more cautious statement by simply saying that the Tamil inscription is less archaic.

Both Hultzsch and Venkatasubba Aiyar state that this Tamil inscription is on the same pillar of the cave as the Sanskrit one. It may, however, be stated here that it is not engraved on the same pillar but on another pillar inside, as pointed out by Dubreuil as a correction to the published report;[3] it is really on the southern pillar of the porch in front of the central shrine inside. Dubreuil in his conclusion attributes this cave to Mahēndravarman from the epithet *Śatrumalla*, which is found not only here but also in the Vallam and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi caves (pp. 63 and 79). He ignores altogether the epithet *Narēndra*. Strangely enough, he does not state anything by way of comparison of the palaeography of the inscription with that of the third inscription in the temple on the eastern pilaster of the façade and attributed to Nandivarman. If it is of Nandivarman II, which it possibly is, it will be of *circa* 750. A careful note of the respective positions of the two Tamil inscriptions in the light of other factors would have been quite useful. Taking into consideration some of the advanced and specialized features of this cave, particularly, the ornate *makara-toraṇa* formed by the central pillars of the façade and their corbels, the *kūḍu*-arches of the well-formed *kapōta* of the façade (neither of them seen in other Mahēndra caves) and the provision of a porch inside the *maṇḍapa* in front of the shrine-cell, which closely approximates the plan of the much elaborate Mahishamardinī cave at Mahābalipuram (p. 151), one is led to think that this cave-temple was probably completed much later than the large and elaborate upper cave at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi (p. 89) with large sculptures, excavated by Mahēndra late in his reign, when his actual power extended to the Chōḷa country, perhaps to mark the place as the last outpost of his kingdom.

The first Tamil inscription is a longer poetical rendering of the Sanskrit verse, and normally it will be reasonable to consider the two as coeval and complementary to each other. Palaeography, though often helpful in dating, has its limitations, and its application in the relative dating of undated inscriptions in the same region within a century or so is sometimes apt to mislead.[4] There are also very few lithic Tamil records of this period for palaeographic comparison. Further, there is no other known instance of the Tamil version or translation of an earlier Sanskrit inscription being made after a lapse of about one or two centuries, though the occurrence of contemporary bilingual inscriptions mentioning the

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[1] *South Indian Inscriptions* XII, no. 10.

[2] *Ibid.*, no. 11.

[3] *Pallava Antiquities*, pp. 30-31.

[4] For instance, see *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVII, p. 8, where it is observed that ' in the matter of assigning dates to records merely on grounds of palaeography, the approximation has been often too wide off the mark '. Instances are also quoted.

same gift is common.[1] In this particular case, there could have been ordinarily no need for such a very late Tamil version of the foundation-inscription, considering the fact that in all the other cave-temples excavated by Mahēndra his foundation-inscriptions are in Sanskrit, without any simultaneous or later Tamil rendering, including the first inscription at Maṇḍgappaṭṭu of Mahēndra, recording his first sensational achievement. In the Vallam cave, (pp. 63-64), however, the foundation-inscription is in Tamil but it is a cave-temple not excavated by Mahēndra himself, but by a son of his vassal in his reign. The Sanskrit verse is engraved at the most prominent place on the front or southern face of the western pilaster of the cave-façade as in other cases, e.g. Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, Mahēndravāḍi, Vallam and Sīyamaṅgalam. It could not be engraved on one of the central pillars as in some of the above cases, since these pillars are fully decorated. The Tamil version is engraved on the lower *śaduram* of the southern pillar of the porch in front of the sanctum inside the cave-temple, again another prominent place, very near to and immediately inside the location of the Sanskrit version. The location of the third later Pallava inscription of Nandivarman on the lower western face of the eastern pilaster of the façade is not as prominent: perhaps the engraver of the time of Nandivarman chose this place purposely away from the two primary inscriptions and since it was blank. Further, the Tamil version is engraved on a part which sould have been finished last, and, as such, it could have been engraved only after the final completion of the work in accordance with the intended plan and not a long time after the event. Thus, if this is conceded and if on palaeographic grounds the Tamil version was to be really of the ninth century, the duration of the work should have extended over a couple of centuries, which is not warranted by any other consideration. The Sanskrit inscription of the seventh century, which is engraved on the façade for the sake of prominence, could also have been engraved only on the completion of the work and not as soon as the façade was completed, with the rest of the work still incomplete. No instance of such inscription commemorating an incomplete work is known. As has been stated earlier, this cave-temple shows more advanced characters than the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi upper cave-temple (Laḷitāṅkura Pallavēśvaragṛiham, pp. 79-89) which it resembles in having the shrine-cell excavated on the lateral wall of the *maṇḍapa*. This feature is unusual, since all the other cave-temples of Mahēndra with his inscription have the shrine-cell or cells on the back wall of the *maṇḍapa*, nor is this usual in the Mahēndra and Māmalla cave-temples of subsequent periods in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. It is, however, common among the cave-temples of the Muttaraiyars and Pāṇḍyas in the Chōḷa- and Pāṇḍi-maṇḍalams.

The titles *Śatrumalla* and *Narēndra* do not occur simultaneously among the many known *birudas* of either Mahēndravarman I or Narasiṁhavarman II Rājasiṁha. It is, however, not unusual for two or more Pallava kings to have the same title. It is perhaps possible that the two titles were borne by Māmalla himself, whose other titles are known from the few labels on the lower storeys of the Dharmarāja-ratha at Mahābalipuram. That the Daḷavāṉūr cave-temple should have been earlier than the time of Paramēśvaravarman is indicated by the absence of a bas-relief of the principal deity on the back wall of the shrine. All these probably indicate that this cave-temple took a longer time for its final completion, perhaps within a century and the Tamil inscription was added when the memory was fresh.

[1] An instance of the kind is the two inscriptions, one in Tamil (Vaṭṭeḻuttu) on the pillar of the façade of the Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam cave-temple, the Sanskrit version of which, mentioning the same fact of the excavation of a Durgā shrine, is engraved on the lintel of the shrine behind the rock-cut *maṇḍapa*. *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1908, no. 37; *Indian Antiquary*, XII, p. 67 and *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, 1951-52, p. 143.

The cave-temple is treated here earlier among the Mahēndra group since it is situated in Tonḍai-manḍalam and lacks the sculptural content of the Tiruchirāpaḷḷi and Śīyamaṅgalam cave-temples.

Tiruchirāppaḷḷi: Lalitāṅkura's cave-temple (upper) (fig. 13; pls. XVII-XX)

There are two rock-cut cave-temples at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, in the District of the same name, one near the base and the other higher up on the Uchchi-p-piḷḷaiyār-malai (' hill with Gaṇēśa temple on top '), also known as the Tāyumāṇasvāmī (Mātṛibhūtēśvara) hill in the heart of the city.

The upper cave-temple excavated on a vertical rising scarp at the base of the top boulder on the southern face about more than half way up the rock, 200 ft. above ground-level, is definitely attributable to Mahēndravarman I. The inscription on the front face of the beam coming over the western pair of the inner row of pillars, a verse in Sanskrit, calls it *Lalitāṅkura-Pallavēśvara-gṛiham*, made by the king Lalitāṅkura.[1] It reads:—

1 *Iti jagati vidita-nāmnā laḷitaṁ Laḷitāṁkurēṇa* [*Pallavapatinā*] [I*]

2 *kṛitinā kāritam=ētal=Lalu*(*li*)*tāṁkura-pallav-ēśvara-gṛiham=ma*[*hitam*] [II*]

The other *birudas* of Mahēndravarman, beginning with *Mahēndravikramaḥ*, are found inscribed on the eastern pilaster of the front row and at various places on the pillars and pilasters and corbels of the façade as well as the inner row. These, like the string of his similar *birudas* at Pallāvaram, include the titles associated with the name and foundation of his other cave-temples such as *Saṅkīrṇajāti*, *Avanibhājana*, *Chittirakārapuli*, *Satyasandha*, *Lalitāṁkura*, *Lakshita*, *Guṇabhara*, *Mattavilāsa*, *Mahēchēththakāri*, etc.[1]

There are two other longer inscriptions in Sanskrit verse, one on either side of the Gaṅgādhara panel, which also confirm that Mahēndra, denoted by his surnames, *Satyasandha*, *Guṇabhara*, *Śatrumalla* and *Purushōttama*, made this temple of Śiva.[2]

It is interesting to note that this cave-temple, like some of the other ones of Mahēndravarman, is located in close proximity to and in association with an important Jaina resort, in this case, as in others, a natural cavern. This cavern is formed by an overhanging boulder on the top of the hill right above the cave-temple visible as a wide gap from the northern side of the rock extending round the western side and as a crevice to the southern side right above the rock-cut cave-temple. It contains beds and Brāhmī and later inscriptions of fifth and sixth centuries A.D., and is unmistakably of Jaina origin. One of the earlier inscriptions in the cavern mentions the word *chirā*, denoting that the ancient name of the place was Chirāppaḷḷi,[3] the suffix *paḷḷi* emphasizing its Jaina association. The full name Śirāmalai ('the hill of Śira') occurs in an eleventh-century Tamil verse inscribed on the back wall of the *manḍapa* of the cave-temple.

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, nos. 8 and 9; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1904, no. 411 and 411-A.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, nos. 33 and 34; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1888, nos. 63 and 64.

[3] The other name Śirrambar of Uṛaiyūrkuṛṛam (division) is found in the inscriptions. The cave-temple is called in a Rājarāja Chōḷa inscription on the second pillar of the façade from the east as Tirukkaaṛṛli—the holy stone (cave) temple at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi. The *Tēvāram* also refers to this place as Chirā or Śirāppaḷḷi. Both the saints, Appar (*Tēvāram*, V-85, vv. 6068-71) and Sambhandar (*Tevāram*, I-98, 1058-68), have sung on this place but neither refers specifically to this cave-temple which Mahēndra celebrates in his inscriptions; they refer only to a (structural) temple on the hill, on the smaller rock in front on which the present Tāyumāṇasvāmi or Mātṛibhūtēśvara temple is built.

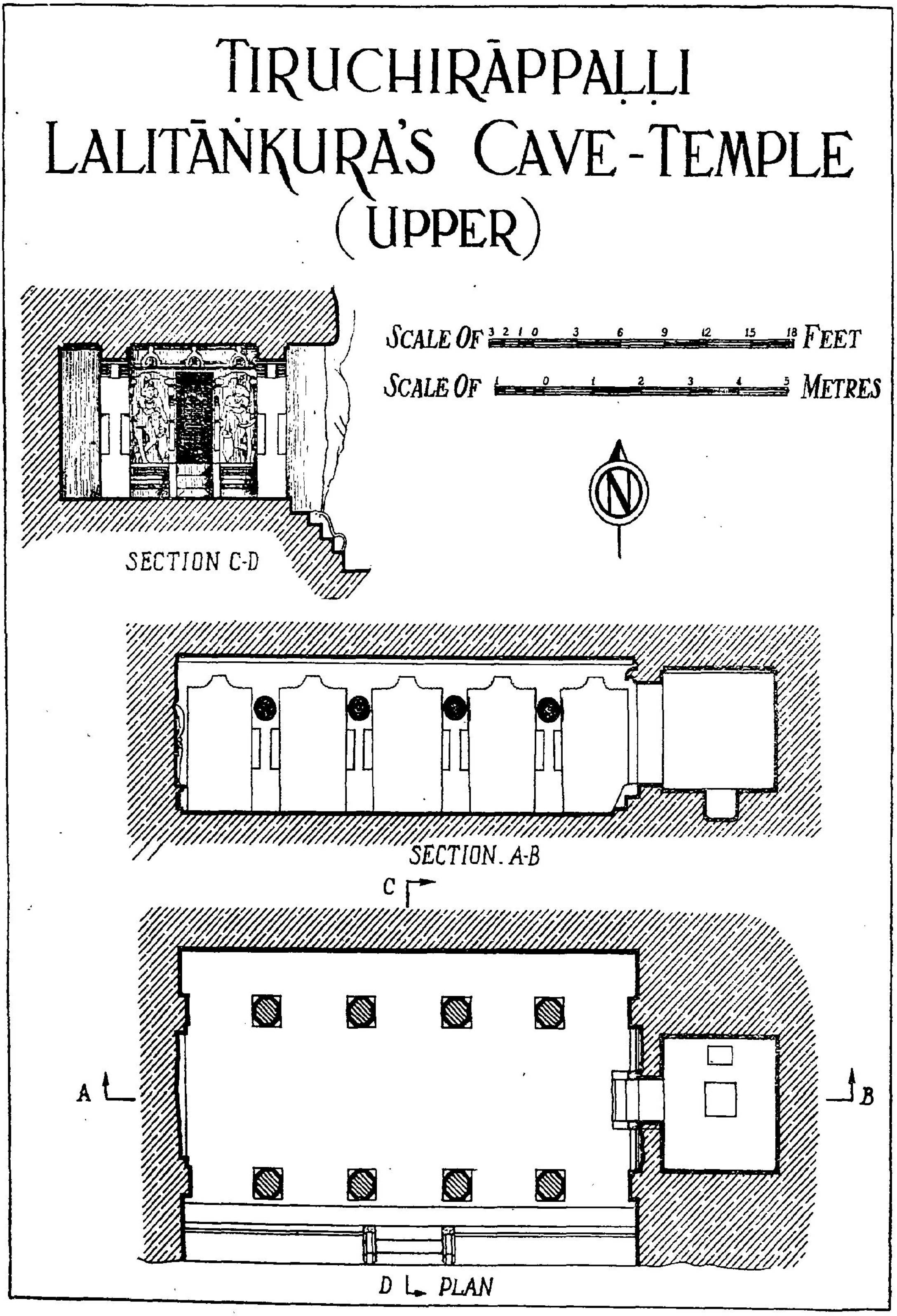
TIRUCHIRĀPPAḶḶI
LALITĀṄKURA'S CAVE-TEMPLE
(UPPER)
SCALE OF 3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 FEET
SCALE OF 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 METRES
N
SECTION C-D
SECTION. A-B
C
A
B
D
PLAN

FIG. 13

Since the rock-face at this point is an almost vertical scarp, the cutting-in of its face preparatory to the execution of the details of the façade, has been uniform all round to a depth of about 3 ft. This cutting-in has afforded a rough projecting cornice on the top in front of the façade, devoid of any form or ornamentation such as the curved *kapōta*, *kūdu*-arches etc., and a platform in front below reached by a rock-cut *sōpāna* of three steps flanked by a *makara-yāḷi* parapet. The extra basal bulge at about the middle portion has been utilized for the *sōpāna*, while on either side of the *sōpāna* the rock has been cut back to form an *adhishṭhāna* with its *paṭṭikā* forming the narrow platform in front of the façade. Of this *adhishṭhana*, the *jagatī*-moulding alone has been completed. The other mouldings above it have not been cut out, but the rock has been recessed back and dressed uniformly with a chamfer towards the top. Further down in the original condition, there were perhaps built-up steps in the place of the modern landing and flight of steps. Of the vertical surfaces of the two wings of the cutting on either side of the façade, the eastern one contains a Grantha and Tamil inscription of the early Pāṇḍya king Māṟan Śaḍaiyaṉ.[1]

The façade consists of four pillars and two pilasters with five *aṅkaṇas* or openings in between (pl. XVII). While the four pillars are differentiated into *śadurams* at the top and bottom with an intervening octagonal *kaṭṭu*, the two pilasters *in antis* are quadrangular throughout. Even in the case of the pillars, the *kaṭṭu* is proportionately of greater height than those of the *śadurams* above and below—a characteristic of the later pillars. The width of the *śadurams* also is less than the usual width of the pillars of the other Mahēndravarman cave-temples (again a feature of post-Mahēndra cave-temples), and both the top and the bottom *śadurams* have heights greater than their sides, the sides being equal, so that the plan is square. The lower *śaduram* has a greater height than the upper one, the extra height making up for the base at the bottom. The slender pillars thus appear graceful since they are taller than in other Mahēndra cave-temples.

The lower *śadurams* of all the four main pillars are adorned by lotus-medallions on all the four sides (pl. XVIII A). These lotus-medallions are not inscribed inside a square as in some other examples. They are essentially full-blossomed lotuses with three seriate petals, the two alternating outer whorls spread out, the innermost row of petals introvert round the central torus. The lotus is delimited externally by two concentric circular lines with a row of beads in between. It is in the upper *śadurams* that we find an important difference between this cave-temple in the heart of the Chōḷa country and the others in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. They are not all lotus-medallions of uniform pattern. They are, on the other hand, circular medallions of various types. Those on the four sides of the easternmost pillar are of identical design, viz., radiating flourishes of scroll-foliage with a circular centre delimited externally by two concentric circles with an intervening row of beads (pl. XVIII B). That on the second pillar from the east, also a circular medallion, is identical on all the four sides and contains inside a *haṁsa* with its plumage merging into the scroll-work of the same pattern and similar plumage issuing from its beak and filling up the portion of the circle in front of it (pl. XVIII C). These medallions are likewise bounded by two concentric circles with a row of beads in between. The third pillar from the east has on its four sides a different pattern, the motif in the centre being a *gaja-makara* or *mātaṅga-nakra* with plumed tail spreading round in the circle and foliage issuing from the mouth to fill up the space inside the circle in front of it (pl. XVIII D). The *makara*-design

[1] *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1903-04, p. 275. It is to be mentioned here that this part of the Chōḷa country did not remain for long under the Pallavas, after Mahēndravarman, but came under the Pāṇḍyas or remained under the independent Muttaraiyars till Pallava power extended over it again a century later in later Pallava times.

on the third pillar from the east is comparable with the one which is the principal motif found in the top *śaduram* of the pillar of the façade of the Tirumalāpuram Pāṇḍya cave-temple in the interior of the Pāṇḍya country, which definitely cannot be of Pallava origin.[1] The westernmost pillar has on its four sides of the top *śaduram* a pattern of medallion unlike the other three. Here again, inscribed inside the double circle, with a row of beads in between, is a convolute scroll-design without a circular central torus as in the easternmost pillar (pl. XVIII E). The convolusion begins right from the centre as four interwoven coils and expands peripherally into four subsidiary convolusions.

The *pōtikās* on the top of the pillars and pilasters are broad and massive, their width being equal to the width of the pillar, their length being about thrice the width. The height of the corbel is, as usual, about half the height of the top *śaduram*. The *pōtikās* are of the *taraṅga*-type with the usual massive rolls, eight in number, and with a median *paṭṭa*. The *paṭṭa* which occupies the central third of the width of the corbel has a bold *kodikkarukku* relief or creeper ornamentation (*patra-latā*) bordered by a pair of lines one on either side and again by a short string connecting the laterals at the extremity where it meets the lower surface of the *uttira*. This design is almost identical with the painted design over the *paṭṭas* in some of the cave-temples. The corbels are mounted directly on the top of the pillars and pilasters without an intervening *phalaka* of greater width as found in some Mahēndra cave-temples in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam. On the top of the corbels is cut the *uttira* of about the same height as the corbels themselves, and above it runs a *vājana*-course visible both externally and internally. The width of the two extreme pilasters is greater than the width of the intervening pillars as also the width of the corbels on top of them, the extra width, seen only on the external side, being equal to the projection and forming the lateral continuation of the *vājana* on the top. The internal faces of these corbels are flush with the vertical side of the pilasters, though there is a *vājana* on the top.

Behind the façade is a large oblong *maṇḍapa*. About 2½ ft. in front of the back (northern) wall of this *maṇḍapa* has been cut a second row of pillars and pilasters symmetrical with those of the façade in front. The pilasters here, unlike their counterparts on the façade, have the same width as the pillars of their own line and are equal to the width of the corbels on the top. The pilasters also are tetragonal from the base to the top, while the pillars, like those on the façade, are differentiated into *śadurams* at the base and the apex and *kaṭṭu* in between, the heights and other dimensions of the *śadurams* and the *kaṭṭus* being also equal to those of the façade members. Most of the faces of the lower *śadurams* of these pillars have been damaged, particularly, the lateral and frontal faces, but their hind faces are comparatively less so.

These less-damaged faces contain almost complete lotus-medallions. That the same designs were carved on the other damaged faces is evident from still-extant fragments. These lotus-medallions adorning all the four faces of the lower *śadurams* are identical with those found on the lower *śadurams* of the façade and likewise do not differ from each other. It is again on the top *śadurams* of these pillars that we find variations in design, not only between pillar and pillar of this row, but also between members of this row and those of the façade. The front and lateral faces of the top *śaduram* of the easternmost pillar contain each a circular medallion bound externally by two concentric circles with a row of beads in between. Inside each circle is the figure of a flying *kinnarī*, the lower portion below the hip expanding all round into volutes—floral and foliar (pl. XVIII F). The inner (north) face of this pillar is blank. The inner face of the top *śaduram* of the second

[1] Longhurst includes it as a Pallava cave-temple. See *Pallava Architecture (Intermediate or Mamalla Period)*, pt. II, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 33 (Calcutta, 1928), pp. 39-40.

pillar is likewise blank, while the front and the two lateral faces each contain the design of a tusked elephant with the hind portions of its body spreading out into leafy and floral volutes all round.[1] The third pillar from the east has medallions carved on all the four faces of its top *śaduram*, the central motif here being a *haṁsa* with its plumage spreading out into volutes and similar leafy and floral volutes issuing from its beak to fill the space in front, the whole inscribed, as in all the other cases, inside a double circle with a row of beads. This pattern resembles that of the second pillar from the north of the front row. The westernmost pillar is peculiar in that the four faces of its top *śaduram* do not contain the same motif: its southern and eastern faces have the *kinnarai*-motif with volutes all round as in the first pillar of the row, while the western face contains a different pattern of floral medallion, which essentially consists of a series of volutes and creepers round a central group of two concentric circles, the innermost representing a torus, the outer circle enclosing a row of beads round the central torus. The inner or the northern face has a similar but indistinctly-carved design. It is on the front and lateral faces of these pillars that we can still see fragments of the thin original plaster with remnants of paintings in bright colours, red and yellow. These are indications of the once-painted nature of the cave, particularly the ornamental designs, on the face of the pillars. While the *taraṅga* mouldings and the central *patra-latā* of the *paṭṭa* of the cobrels were also likewise painted (there are fragments of painted plaster *in situ*), the front and hind faces of these corbels above the *śadurams* could not have been painted, since, particularly, the front faces contain the contemporary Pallava-Grantha inscriptions of the *birudas* and the hind ones are left blank and comparatively rough. This must have been the case also of the *śadurams* and corbels of the pillars of the façade. Or, in the alternative, the stucco and painting must have been of later date applied over the inscribed parts also, as has been found in the Kailasanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram. The corbels on top of the pillars and pilasters resemble those of the façade and the *patra-latā* design on the median *paṭṭa* is also the same. One feature, which is only faintly noticeable in the case of the corbels of the façade, which are all broken at the edges, but is distinctly visible in the case of the inner corbels is that the middle member of the series of rolls occupying the lower angle of the corbel is larger than the rest and indicates at either end a reversal of the moulding by a volute line, as is often seen in the contemporary and earlier *taraṅga*-corbels of the Chālukyas at Bādāmi and Aihoḷe. This is a feature again found in many of the later Pallava and early Chōḷa structural temples in the Chōḷa country.

Over the corbels runs a beam and above it a *vājana*. The *vājana* is visible on either side on top of the corbels, and behind this row of pillars and pilasters this projecting *vājana* runs round as a continuous moulding over the top of the blank side walls and the back wall of the *maṇḍapa*. But under the ceiling between the inner row of pillars and pilasters and those of the outer row of the façade, the *vājana* terminates at either end and does not extend over the side walls of the *maṇḍapa*. Thus, the division of the *maṇḍapas* into a larger outer hall and a narrow vestibule behind the inner row of pillars and pilasters is also indicated by the *vājana*-courses of the two ceilings. The ceiling on the top of this part of the *maṇḍapa* as well as the narrow strip behind the inner row have been well finished and show traces of old plaster, particularly at the edges, with fragments of paintings here and there—indicating again that the ceiling also contained paintings, perhaps the usual canopy-design.

[1] Of these the *makara*-fish motif is common in the Pāṇḍya country (fish being the emblem of the Pāṇḍyas). Similar medallions are found in the cave-temple at Tirumalāpuram in the southern part of the Pāṇḍya country. The elephant is often used as a symbol by the Muttaraiyars, and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi was under the Muttaraiyars during the period and adjoined the Pāṇḍya country.

Cut on the eastern wall of the *maṇḍapa* is a shrine-front consisting of a central opening with a rock-cut *sōpāna* in front and two *dvāra-pāla*-niches, one on either side, all mounted on a moulded *adhishṭhāna* (pl. XIX). The *adhishṭhāna* cut on either side of the *sōpāna* consists of a *jagatī*, a *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, recessed *kaṇṭha* with two *kampa*-courses, one above and one below, and a projecting *paṭṭikā* on top. The *sōpāna* has three rock-cut steps with two curved parapets, which are plain (not of the type with proboscis issuing from *vyāla*- or *makara*-heads) and dipping almost vertically down without flanking the lowermost step, which, in its original unbroken condition was a *chandra-śilā*, mounted on an oblong plinth indicating the level of the *upāna*. The two parapets are thus only slight projections in front of the mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna*. Mounted on the top of the *adhishṭhāna* are four equally-spaced pilasters, the shrine-entrance being cut in the space between the two central pilasters, while the *dvāra-pāla* of each side fills the intercolumnar space between the extreme pilaster and the inner pilaster forming the jamb of the entrance. The two central pilasters are more completely finished than the two extreme ones, the lower portions of the shafts of which merge with the thighs and apparel of the adjacent *dvāra-pālas*. The central pilasters show all the parts of a conventional pillar, viz., a square base, a tetragonal shaft with a raised floral band or *madhya-bandha* about the middle of its height and again a *padma-bandha* with *malāsthāna* on top of the shaft. The *padma-bandha*, as in the case of fully worked-out pillars at Mahābalipuram, consists of a double row of lotus-petals, the upper row *ūrdhva* and the lower *adhō-mukha*, and below these is a broader band of *patra-latā*, while still below are looped *muktasaras* with tassels in between. All these are cut in fairly bold relief. Over the *padma-bandha* are cut the well-formed *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha* and *kumbha* with a *vīra-kaṇṭha* on top. There is no *phalaka* or *padma* on top of the *kumbha*. The corbel-brackets seen in their profile are of the *taraṅga* type with the central roll larger than the rest and marked externally by an opposed volute line. Over the corbels of the four pilasters runs a thin beam with a *vājana* and a still more projecting *valabhī*, which, though not rounded off into a convex curve, still retains an angular shape. Over the *valabhī* is cut a well-projected *kapōta*, its well-scooped underside having a prominent concavity. Externally too, its convex flexture is well-marked and the brim (or eaves-line) has been distinctly cut out. On the front face of the *kapōta* are three symmetrically-placed *kḍūu*-arches, one right above the shrine-entrance and one each on the middle of either side, over the *dvāra-pāla*-niche. The *kūḍus* are arched with two projections at the bottom, which are faint *makara*-heads, their tails coalescing into the arch. The finials on the top are truncated, only their lower portions being visible, their upper portions merging into the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa*. At either extreme of the *kapōta*, where it meets the side of the corbel placed over the main eastern pilasters of the outer and inner rows of the *maṇḍapa* is shown the scroll-work of the *kōṇa-paṭṭa*. It is over the ends of this *kapōta* that the *vājana* running over the main pillars of the front and inner rows of the *maṇḍapa* terminate. This *kapōta* as well as the *vājana*, like the corbel and the capital of the pilasters, show traces of painted plaster.

The two *dvāra-pālas* on either side of the entrance are identical. Both are in semi-profile, their bodies turned towards the shrine-entrance and faces half-turned to the front, and are two-armed, standing with one leg bent and raised up and the other planted straight on the ground, thus resulting in a *tribhaṅga* pose. Both of them rest the palms of their outer arms on the top of the massive club with the inner arm thrown over the palm and hanging down, so that the palm of one hand placed on top of the club goes under the arm-pit of the other. In each case the club has a conical spike at the massive end and a handle of narrow width on top and is entwined by a serpent. The *dvāra-pālas* wear *yajñōpavītas* in the normal fashion, heavy *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears, anklets, *hāras* round their necks and *jaṭā-bhāras* surmounted by a *jaṭā-makuṭa* on their heads. They do not have any horn-like appendage as are found in some of the other caves, but they have the usual fierce look.

The shrine-cell itself, cut into the rock behind the entrance between the *dvāra-pālas*, is almost a cube, about 9 ft. in length and width and slightly less in height. All its walls and its ceiling are evenly finished. On the top of the wall runs a projecting *vājana*-course with the ceiling cut above it. The floor, too, is well-finished but, as usual in all cave-temples, without an original water-outlet. Right in the centre of the floor is cut a socket, 2 ft. square and about 2½ ft. deep and to the north of it, between it and the wall of that side is a shallower oblong pit 2 ft. × 1 ft. and about 9 in. deep cut longitudinally. While the central pit could have accommodated the representation of Śiva, as Mahēndravarman mentions in his inscription, the pit to its north might have contained a bas-relief of Pārvatī mentioned in the same inscription; perhaps she was shown as facing the central deity (as if worshipping it from its north side, which is the conventional position for a *dēvī* or for one performing *archana*). The inscription does not indicate that Mahēndra installed a statue of himself, as would be clear from the discussion of the inscriptions (pp. 86-88).

On the western wall of the *maṇḍapa*, right opposite the shrine-front, and occupying, like it, the entire space between the two western pilasters of the outer and inner row of the *maṇḍapa* is a large bas-relief panel (pl. XX). The *adhishṭhāna* of this panel is peculiar in that it has a *vēdikā*-pattern with circular lotus-decoration. It has, below, a projecting *khura* of small height and a recessed portion of a greater height, again with a projecting *prati*-course on top. While the lowermost moulding is plain, the intervening recessed portion, which is broader, is a trellis- or rail-pattern showing a series of uprights connected by three continuous cross-beams, one at the bottom, another on the top and the third running right across the middle. While the lowermost cross-beam is plain, the upper one is decorated with a series of loops of garlands with hanging tassels in between. All the uprights as well as the central cross-beams are adorned by conventional circular lotus-designs. The projecting *prati* on the top shows a *padma*-moulding, a row of erect lotus-petals and two lines with a row of beads in between forming the top-decoration. At either extreme of this railing-like *adhishṭhāna* are two more prominently-projecting pilaster-strips, perhaps indicating the main posts, with *patra-latā* design on their front faces. The bas-relief on the top of this is a beautiful composition of Śiva as Gaṅgādhara[1] with attendant figures on the sides and top. Śiva here is standing with his left leg planted firm on the ground, his right foot raised and held up in that position by the head and left arm of a crouching *gaṇa* (*Kumbhōdara*) below. The right hand of the squatting *gaṇa* holds a serpent. Śiva himself is four-armed and wears an elaborate *jaṭā-makuṭa*. The upper right arm holds out one of his tresses into which Gaṅgā is descending. Gaṅgā is shown on the top as a small female figure with both her hands in *añjali* and the lower portions of her body below the hip merging into a cloud line. The lower right arm of Śiva holds a serpent by its tail, the serpent itself hanging down with its expanded hood raised up, facing Śiva's bent right knee. The upper left holds an *akshamālā*, while the lower left is in *kaṭi*. The *vastra-yajñōpavīta* of Śiva is worn in the *nivīta*-fashion going outside both his right arms. He wears coiled *valayas* round his wrist and elaborate *kēyūras* above his elbows, *makara-kuṇḍalas* in both the ears dangling from the tips of the large extended lobes and resting on his shoulders. The *jaṭā-makuṭa* is decorated on the front and is held in position by a coronet with three ornamental finials, one in front and the two at the sides, while the rest of the *jaṭā* is coiled up on the top. On the top of the right side of the *jaṭā* is the characteristic moon, while at the bottom of the left side, just over the left ear and placed on the band over his forehead, is the skull. Behind the head is shown a *śiraśchakra*. Śiva wears a broad necklace round his neck and an *udara-bandha* round his belly. The drapery of

[1] The choice of this form of Śiva harmonizes with the idea of *nadī-priya*, by which term Śiva is referred to in the second line of the inscription no. 33 (p. 87).

his *vastra* below the hip is shown very well by the folded lines reaching up to both the ankles with the central fan-like pleat of the *kachcha* hanging between the legs. Round his waist, he wears a *kaṭi-bandha*, and another *uttarīya* hangs loose in a loop in front and has tassels on either side. Above the rosary of the left upper arm of Śiva and corresponding to the position of Gaṅgā on top of the panel on the other side is a figure of a crouching animal not easily identifiable. It has no clear hump to mark it as a bull (taking the place as a *vṛishabha-dhvaja*).[1]

On either side on the top are two flying *vidyādharas* with *jaṭā-makuṭas*, *makara-kuṇḍalas* and *nivīta-yajñōpavītas* more or less resembling the main figure of Śiva himself in apparel and decoration. Below, kneeling on either side of Śiva, are two identical figures also wearing heavy *jaṭā-makuṭas*, without *kuṇḍalas* in the ear-lobes and the other elaborate ornaments found on the main figure and the *vidyādharas*. Their inner arms are raised in adoration while their outer ones are placed on the respective thighs in *kaṭi*. While the southern figure wears the four strands of a *sūtra-yajñōpavīta*, the northern one wears a *vastra-yajñōpavīta*. Their *jaṭā-makuṭas* too are slightly different from those of the Śiva and the *vidyādharas*.

Behind these two kneeling figures and half-emerging from the corners are two more identical figures of what appear to be adoring *ṛishis*, judging from their huge *jaṭās* and bearded faces. Their inner hands are also raised in adoration; while the outer hand of the southern figure shows an indistinct *mudrā*, the corresponding figure on the north holds something like an offering.

This bas-relief is one of the finest specimens of early Pallava sculpture and is the forerunner of the large bas-reliefs at Māmallapuram, especially the great panel depicting Arjuna's Penance, where the standing form of Śiva is almost identical in line, pose and ornament with the Gaṅgādhara here. Such a Gaṅgādhara is again reproduced in the Ādivarāha cave-temple of Paramēśvaravarman but without the attendant figures (p. 172).

A close study of the two verse-inscriptions on the pilasters adjoining the Gaṅgādhara panel would show that both are parts of the same composition, commencing on the northern pilaster and continued on the southern pilaster, though they have been numbered in the reverse order as 34 and 33 in the epigraphical collection. They reveal a continuity of purport, as will be seen in the sequel.

Inscription 34

1 *Śail-ēndra-mūrddhani śilā-bhavanē vichitrē*
2 *śailīn=tanuṁ Guṇabharō nṛipatir=nnidhāya* [।*]
3 *Sthāṇuṁ vyadha*[*tta*] *Vi* [*dhi*]*r=ēsha yathārtha-saṁjñaṁ*
4 *sthāṇuḥ svayañ=cha saha tēna jagatsu jātaḥ* [॥1*]
5 *Gṛiham=akṛita Śatrumallō girīndra-kanyā-*
6 *patēr=ggirāv-asmin* [।*] *giriśasya giriśa-*
7 [*saṁ*] *jñām=anvartthikartum=arthapatiḥ* ॥[2*]
8 *Vibhūtiñ=Chōḷānāṁ katham=aham=avēkshē-*
9 *ya vipulāṁ nadīṁ vā Kāvīrīm=avani-bhavan-āva-*
10 *sthita iti* [।*] *Harēṇ=ōktaḥ prītyā vibhur=adiśa-*
11 *d=abhraṁliham=idam=Manu-pra* [*khyō rājyē*] *ga* (*gi*)*ri-bhavana-*
12 *m=asmai Guṇabharaḥ* ॥[3*] *Nirmmāpitā* [*m=iti mudā*]

[1]Longhurst calls it a deer, *Pallava Architecture* pt. I, p. 15. The lower part of its face is broken.

13 *Purushōttamēna śailīṁ Harasya tanum=aprati-*
14 *mām-anēna* [।*] *kṛitvā Śivaṁ śirasi dhārayat=ātma-*
15 *saṁstham=uchchaiḥ-śirastvam=acha* [*lasya*] *kṛitaṁ krit-ā-*
16 *rttham* ॥[4]

INSCRIPTION 33

1 *Kāvīrīn=nayan-ābhirāma-salilām=ārā-*
2 *ma-mālā-dharām dēvō vīkshya nadī-priyaḥ*
3 *priya=*[*gu*] *ṇām=apy=ēsha rajyēd=iti* [।*] *sāśaṁ-*
4 *kā Girikanyakā pitṛi-kulaṁ hitv=ēha manyē gi-*
5 [*rau*] *nityan=tishṭhati Pallavasya dayitām=ētāṁ bru-*
6 *vāṇā nadīm* ॥ [1*] *Guṇabhara-nāmani rājany=anēna li-*
7 *ṅgēna liṅgini jñānam* [।*] *prathatāñ=chirāya lōkē vi-*
8 *paksha-vṛittēḥ parāvṛittam* ॥ [2*] *Chōḷo-vishayasya śailō-*
9 *maulir=iv=āyaṁ mahā-maṇir=iv=āsya* [।*] *Hara-gṛiham=ēta-*
10 *j=jyotis=tadīyam=iva Śāṁkaraṁ jyōtiḥ* ॥ [3*] *Śilā-*[*kha*]*rē-*
11 *ṇa janitā Satyasandhasya bhautikī* [।*] *mūrttiḥ kīrttima-*
12 *yī ch=āsya kṛitā tēn-aiva śāśvatī* ॥ [4*] *Nishkṛi* [*shya*] *chalā* [*sa*]*-*
13 *madhāyi* [*Guṇabha*]*rē bhaktiḥ* * * *[1]

The first verse of no. 34 straightaway states the fact of the excavation of the cave-temple on the top of the hill and its creation by Guṇabhara (Mahēndra). The temple is called *śilā-bhavana* ('the wonderful stone house') and the installed object is referred to as *śailītanu* (stone body or form), which seems to suggest a stone image or *sakala liṅga* and not perhaps a symbol or a *nishkala liṅga.* The term *sthāṇu* (also referring to Śiva) seems to be used only for the sake of the pun in the statement that the king made *sthāṇu* (Śiva) true to its meaning (stationary).

The next verse, stating that Śatrumalla (Mahēndra) made this hill-abode for the husband of the daughter of the King of Mountains (Pārvatī) and thereby made the term *Giriśa* true to its significance, would imply that a form of Pārvatī also was installed (as is indeed suggested in the subsequent verses).

The third verse purports to explain the circumstances and the manner of the choice of this hill and the place where the cave-temple was to be excavated on it. The *dhvani* of this verse is that Mahēndra chose this hill and excavated the temple on the top in answer to a query from Śiva, who, coming to know of the king's intention, is supposed to have enquired: 'How could I, standing in a temple on earth (the ground) view the might of the Chōḷas or the beauties of the Kāvīri (river)?' and in response to it Guṇabhara (Mahēndra) made and assigned to Him the temple on the top of the hill which touches the clouds, so that Śiva could have the best view of the famous river and the fertile country of the great Chōḷas.

The next verse purports to describe the benefit that the hill called Śirāmalai derived as a result, viz., by having the matchless figure of Śiva (*Harasya tanu*) on its head, placed there by Purushōttama (Mahēndra), the noble hill had its greatness enhanced and its own name Śirā (Śirāmalai was its traditional Tamil name) made significant or meaningful.'

[1] Hultzsch, *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, nos. 33 and 34, pp. 28-30.

This imagery is continued in the verses on the other pilaster (copied as a separate inscription, no. 33) as a natural sequel, composed as if to explain the reasons for the simultaneous installation of Pārvatī by his side. It implies that the installation of Pārvatī was necessitated by the very act of installing Śiva on the top of a hill with the beautiful Kāverī in full view. The poet's conjecture (*chamatkāra*) is that the Daughter of the Mountain (Pārvatī) left her father's home (Himālaya) and stayed permanently by the side of Śiva here, being suspicious that the god, *Nadī-priya* that he was (the allusion is to his espousing Gaṅgā), having perceived Kavīrī, who was pleasing to the eyes, bedecked and possessing lovely qualities, might fall in love with her (also), and therefore, in order to din into his ears constantly that she (Kavīrī) was (already) the beloved of the Pallava king. (The alternative meanings of *Kavīrī* and *Pallava*, respectively 'courtesan' and 'libertine', suggest a *double entendre*). The Gaṅgādhara panel between the inscribed pilasters showing Śiva receiving Gaṅgā on his locks, on the wall opposite the shrine, becomes significant in this context.

In the light of the above, while the implication is that the *sakala* or anthropomorphic forms (*tanu*) of Śiva and Pārvatī were installed in the shrine, the words *liṅgēna liṅginī jñānam* of the next verse may not perhaps indicate a *liṅga* or the symbolic form of Śiva as has been taken by some. *Liṅga* also means the image of a god or an idol (*sakala*)[1]. If it was a *nishkala liṅga*, its description as *śailī tanu* (stone form or body) should also mean a symbol and not a bodily form and particularly the adjective *śailī* ('of stone') would indicate a stone form only. But the terms *tanu*, *Harasya tanu*, etc., are clearly used in the other verses. Hultzsch, aware of this apparent contradiction, says: 'The whole verse has a *double entendre*. It contains allusions to Indian logic (*Tarkaśāstra*), in which *liṅgin* means the subject of a proposition, *liṅga* the predicate of a proposition and *vipaksha* an instance on the opposite side', suggesting the possibility of alternate meanings to the term *liṅga*. The contemporary Śaiva saints do not mention a stone *liṅga* in any of their hymns and we have not also any rock-cut *liṅga* in any of the Pallava cave-temples, particularly of the time of Mahēndra. The term *liṅga* therefore seems to refer to the same as *śaili tanu*. In the context of the preceding verses *liṅga* would denote only the entire work (excavation of the cave-temple and the instalation therein) of the *liṅgin* viz. king Guṇabhara. The term *vipaksha vṛitti* would indicate faith other than to which the above work pertained.

In the next verse, the poet says that the temple was the crest-jewel, while the hill (again an allusion to its name) on which it was excavated formed the crest (*śira*) of the Chōḷa country, and more than that the lustre or brilliance of this crest-jewel was Śaṅkara (the god installed). Here by implication, perhaps, the king is likened to the Chōḷa country, the hill (*śira*) the king's head, the temple the crest-jewel on his diadem and its lustre (*jyōti*) *śāṅkara*.

The following verse describes the merit of this act of the king in creating this temple. Hultzsch translates it as follows: 'By the stone-chisel a material body of Satyasandha (Mahēndra) was executed, and by the same an eternal body of his fame was produced'. This earthy abode of Satyasandha created by cutting into stone (*śilākarēṇa*) as well as his fame have been thus made eternal.

The extant portion of the last fragmentary verse not translated by Hultzsch refers 'to the digging out of the cave-temple (*nishkṛishyachalā*) and Guṇabhara's devotion'.

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[1] *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Monier-Williams (1956), p. 901; Apte (1954), p. 1336, s. v. *Liṅgam;* cf. *Rāmāyaṇa* (*Sundara Kāṇḍa;* 35v. 3) where Sītā to be reassured asks Hanūmān to describe the '*liṅgas*' (description, complexion, stance, features etc.) of Rāma and Lakshmaṇa (*yāni Rāmasya liṅgām*. . . .) and Hanūmān uses the term *chinha* in the sense of distinguishing features.

It is clear that Mahēndra excavated his first cave-temple at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu, and the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi cave-temple was only one of the latest of his excavations, and he dedicated the first one to the Trimūrti and not to Śiva alone as would be expected of an ardent Śaiva, and that too, a zealous new convert from another faith. The king, who is said to have returned from the path of 'hostile conduct' to Śaivism, would not have dedicated his early excavations to Trimūrti, or subsequently to Vishṇu, as he did at Mahēndravāḍi. Perhaps it would be more correct to assume that he was a tolerant follower of the Vaidīka-mārga (Brahmanical religion) and under the influence of the contemporary events and in the trend of the prevailing religious revival he became an ardent Śaiva in the latter part of his life, when all his three cave-temples—Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, Daḷavānūr and Śīyamaṅgalam—were dedicated to Śiva in preference to the other gods. It is to be noted here that the assumption of the story of his conversion from Jainism to Śaivism is made usually in the light of the much later tradition as embodied in the *Periyapurāṇam* and the rather uncertain identification of Guṇadhara of that tradition with Guṇabhara Mahēndra[1]. A study of his extant cave-temples containing his own inscriptions in their proper sequence leads to a different probability viz., that he was a tolerant monarch when he excavated his earlier cave-temples dedicated to all the Hindu gods, then to Vishṇu and lastly to Śiva.

Śīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple (fig. 14; pls. XXI-XXV)

Śīyamaṅgalam in Wandiwash Taluk, North Arcot District, lies amidst a group of hills at a distance of about 2 miles from Dēśūr, in the other flank of a large irrigation-tank. Besides this tank at its rear, there is another large tank in front with a tall pillar-like rock in it, which probably gave the name of Stambhēśvara or Tūṇāṇḍār to the temple. The temple is called in its earlier inscriptions *Avanibhājana-Pallaveśvaram.* The rock-cut cave-temple itself forms the central shrine of the Stambhēśvara or Tūṇāṇḍār temple, with structural additions of the late Pallava, Chōḷa and Vijayanagar times. It is a large excavation made into the almost vertical scarp of a huge boulder facing west, with a *maṇḍapa* in front and a shrine-cell behind. There has been practically very little cutting-in of the original outer surface of the rock in order to prepare a vertical face for the excavation.

On the façade is a row of two massive pillars and two pilasters *in antis*, one at either end of the excavation and beyond the two pilasters, on the dressed rock-face are cut two niches, one on either side of the façade each provided with fully-formed pilasters which are really *tōraṇa-stambhas.* Each niche has a simple-moulded *adhishṭhāna* of the *mañcha*-variety at the base, its prominent *paṭṭikā* or the top moulding forming the floor of the niche. Below the *paṭṭikā*, the *adhishṭhāna* is recessed into a *kaṇṭha* and at its two extreme ends coinciding with the base of the pilasters are square blocks in low relief looking as if they were downward extensions of the pilasters. These are the pillar-bases as are usually found in all types of *adhishṭhānas* below the *paṭṭikā.* The pilaster itself is tetragonal and carries all the capital-components, viz., *padma-bandha*, marked by a series of transverse parallel lines with a row of lotus-petals on the top, the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kumbha*, *padma* and *phalaka*, all tetragonal in section. The *phalaka* is not quite so large as in later Pallava and early Chōḷa temples. Bridging the top of the two *phalakas* on either side of the niche is a lintel-plate carrying the *makara-tōrana*, the *makaras* perched on each abacus facing each other with short outward tails and with a rider each (a *gaṇa*) on their backs. Issuing from the mouths of both the *makaras* is a *tōraṇa* of beaded garland and foliage terminating on either side of a central

[1] See K. R. Srinivasan, *Journal of the Madras University*, vol. xxxii, no. 1, pp. 194-97.

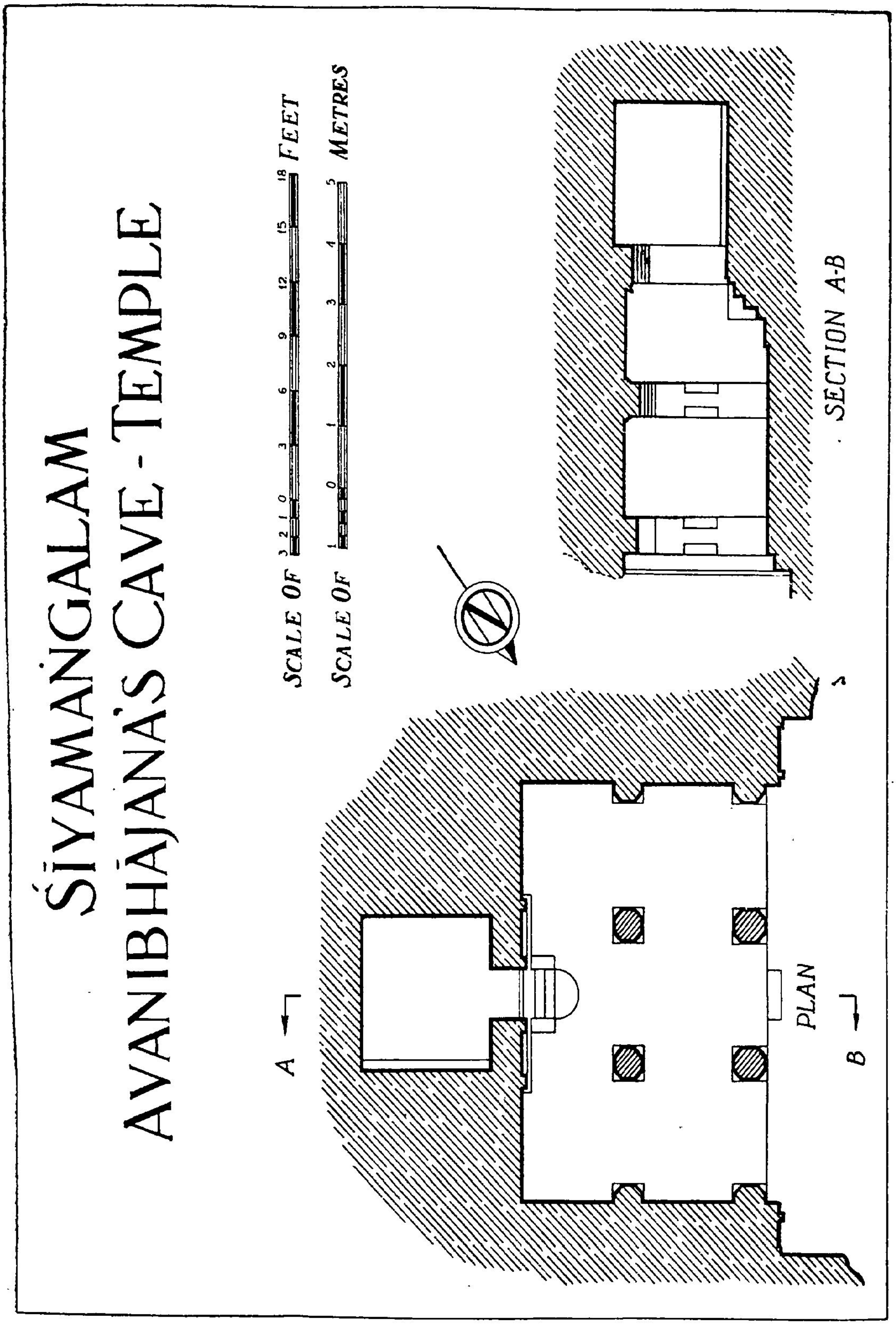

ŚĪYAMAṄGALAM
AVANIBHĀJANA'S CAVE - TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 14

figure seated on a full-blossomed lotus with a prominent *chhannavīra* crossing over his chest. The stalk of the lotus rests on the lintel-plate. On either side of the lotus-stalk and below the loops of the *tōraṇa* are two *kūḍu*-like floriated designs with a central semi-circle and foliage on either side. The *makara-tōraṇas* of both niches are identical. Probably, the *gaṇas* or *yakshas* over each represent the two *nidhis* (*śaṅkha-nidhi* and *padma-nidhi*), though there is no differentiation in the symbols. In having *makara-tōraṇas*, though over the niches at either end of the façade, this resembles the Daḷavāṉūr temple, where the *tōraṇa* comes over the two central pillars of the façade.

The pillars of the façade are massive and cubical as in the other rock-cut cave-temples, the top and bottom of each column forming *śadurams* with an intervening *kaṭṭu*. While the sides of both the *śadurams* are almost identical, the height of the lower *śaduram* exceeds that of the upper one, the extra height accounting for the base of the pillar. On the three sides of the lower *śadurams*, frontal and lateral, are carved in clear relief circular lotus-medallions inside beaded square frames. The corners between the square and the inscribed circle in each medallion is occupied by scroll-ornament. The lotuses are full-blown showing three seriate arrangement of petals, the two outer whorls alternating and expanding, while the innermost closes round the torus. On the top *śaduram* of each pillar the arrangement is slightly different. On the two lateral sides is a different floral design embossed inside a square and not the usual lotus-medallions. It consists of a small vase with two *koḍis* (*latā*) or scrolls spreading out on either side, their foliage ascending up in alternate loops. In the gap between them at the centre is a line of two clusters of lotus-flowers, one cluster placed above the other, each cluster consisting of a central opening-lotus flanked by two buds (pls. XXI A and B). On the front faces, however, are carved two standing lions facing in with bead-like curled manes and long uplifted tail, looping down over the haunch, the loop erect and the hairy tip hanging like a tassel on the flank outside (pls. XXII A and B). This motif is found on the seals of the early copper-plate grants of the Pallavas and again in the Arjuna's Penance bas-relief at Mahābalipuram.

Below the lion of the southern pillar and occupying the front face of the *kaṭṭu* is the foundation-inscription of Mahēndravarman, in which he is designated as Lalitāṅkura and the name of the cave-temple is mentioned as Avanibhājana-Pallavēśvaram. It is a single Sanskrit verse in *āryā* metre in four lines, reading—

1 *Lālitā*[*ṁ*]*kurēṇa rājñ-Āva=*

2 *nibhāja*[*na*] *-Pallavēśvaran=nāma* [।*]

3 *kāritam=ētat-svē*[*dh*]*ā* (*chchā*)*-karaṇḍa-*

4 *m=iva puṇya-ratnānāṁ* (॥*)

'By King Lalitāṅkura was caused to be made this (temple) named Avanibhājana-Pallavēśvaram—a casket as it were (worked at) his will (and enclosing) jewels viz., good deeds.'[1]

Avanibhājana (a title of Mahēndra) means 'possessor of the earth', and the word *karaṇḍa* (in Tamil) means a cave or cave-temple. The word *tiru-p-patanam*, meaning 'rock-shelter for a Jaina monk', is implied in the Tamil inscription[2] on another rock at the same place which appears to have been an important Jaina resort and seat of a pontiff.

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, VI, pp. 319-320.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, no. 441.

Correspondingly, on the northern pillar, below the lion, is a Tamil inscription of the third year of Pallava Vijaya-Dantivikramavarman, which refers to the construction of a structural *mukha-maṇḍapa* in front by a local chieftain with the consent of the local Gaṅga chief.[1] The inner faces of the *śaduram* of both pillars are blank. The corbels on the top are large, the length of each being three times the width of the pillar below and their thickness equal to the *uttira* above. The corbel-brackets have curved profiles, prominent *taraṅga*-ornamentation with the median *paṭṭa*, a feature not found in the other cave-temples of Mahēndra except in the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi upper cave-temple. The pilasters at either extreme of the façade (pls. XXI C and D) are similar to the pillars in being differentiated into the top and bottom *śadurams* and the intervening octagonal *kaṭṭu*. In this, the pilasters resemble those of the Maṇḍagappaṭṭu façade, while in all the other Mahēndra temples they are uniformly tetragonal and not differentiated into *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*. The faces of the lower *śadurams* of the two pilasters facing corresponding pillars of their sides have the same lotus-medallions carved in clear relief. The corresponding faces of the upper *śadurams* contain bas-relief sculptures. That on the top of the northern pillar represents Śiva as Vṛishabhāntika; Śiva is standing four-armed, the upper two holding *mṛiga* and *akshamālā*, lower right in *kaṭi* and the lower left resting by the elbow on the inturned face of the bull standing behind with his fingers caressing the snout of the bull. He wears his *yajñōpavīta* in the *nivīta*-fashion. Behind him is planted the *śūla-dhvaja*. In front of the bull and to the left of Śiva stands Pārvatī in *tribhaṅga*, two-armed, the left arm in *kaṭi* and the right holding a flower (*līlā-kamala*). She wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa* like Śiva and stands under a tree. On the upper *śaduram* of the southern pilaster is Śiva dancing (pl. XXIII), perhaps the earliest extant representation of such a form in the south. He is four-armed. The pose of dance represents *ānanda-tāṇḍava* or *bhujaṅga-trāsita*; but there is no *apasmāra* or *gaṇa* below his right foot. In front of his right foot and below the upraised and swirling left leg is a coiled serpent with its hood raised and on the other side correspondingly is seated a *gaṇa* with both his hands beating on an *ūrdhva-maddala*. On both the ankles of Śiva are *kiṅkiṇīs*. Standing in front of dancing Śiva to his right and facing him is another *gaṇa* with both hands in *añjali*. The upper right arm of Śiva holds the bowl of fire, the upper left the *paraśu*; the lower right is in the *abhaya* and the lower left in the *kari-* or *lōla-hasta* pose, almost touching the head of the *gaṇa* playing on the *maddala*. He wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa* and *patra-kuṇḍalas* and on the front of the *jaṭā-mākuṭa* on the right side is shown the crescent moon, while below the *makuṭa* on the forehead is shown the third eye. Some of the tresses are flowing on either side as usual in the Naṭarāja forms. On the front or western faces of the pilasters, the top semi-*śadurams* of each has a rectangular shallow niche containing a female figure in graceful pose, the one on the north carrying what appears to be a *pushpa-puṭa* (*kuḍalai* in Tamil) in the left hand from which she picks out the flowers with the right, as if in *archana*. The corresponding one on the north has her left hand in *kaṭi* and holds a *nīlōtpala* in the right. The head-dresses of both the figures are slightly different and both of them wear *yajñōpavītas*.

On the beam over the façade in front is a short *vājana*-course, the rock-ledge above projecting in front like a *kapōta*. The front face of the *kapōta*, however, is rendered invisible by the roof of the structural *maṇḍapa* in front. This structural *maṇḍapa* in front is the one that was added in later Pallava times as stated in the Pallava inscription on the front face of the northern pillar.

In the niches at either extreme of the façade and placed inside the *tōraṇa-stambhas* are two warrior-like figures, one in each (pls. XXIV A and B). They are different

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, VI, p. 321.

representations, though their ornaments and apparel are identical. The one on the north holds a shield by the left hand swung towards his right side and a stick or cudgel (*lakuṭa*) held up by his right hand over his head in the posture of striking. The other on the southern side holds up the shield above his head like an umbrella as if to ward off a stroke and brandishes the stick (*daṇḍa*) in his right hand with a swing to his left. He has a dagger stuck to his belt. His tresses bound by a ribbon round his forehead are flowing on either side as in the Naṭarāja forms, and on the right side of the ribbon is a prominent crescent. The head-dress of the northern warrior is slightly different, the flowing tresses, similar to those of the southern one, are bound by a short coronet with three circular medallions on the front side. Both of them wear a *patra-kuṇḍala* in one ear and a dangling *makara-kuṇḍala* in the other. The *vastra* is tied up to the knees in folds and tucked behind in the *kachcha*-fashion.

The oblong *maṇḍapa* behind the façade is divided into front and hind portions by an inner row of pillars and pilasters of the same dimensions as those on the façade, but without the lotus-medallions on their lower *śadurams* or the scroll-work and bas-relief sculptures in the upper *śadurams*. The corbels have been cut with curved profiles, but without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation and median *paṭṭa*. The floor-levels of the two *maṇḍapas* are slightly differentiated in height, the difference in height being about an inch, marked by a line in front of the bases of the inner row of pillars and pilasters. The ceilings on the top are cut over a projecting small *vājana* over the *uttira*. The walls of both the *maṇḍapas* are plain.

Projecting slightly from the middle of the hind wall is the front of the *garbha-gṛiha* or inner shrine (pl. XXV A) with a moulded *adhishṭhāna*, consisting of a *jagatī*, circular or *vṛitta kumuda*, recessed *kaṇṭha* and projecting *paṭṭikā*. The continuity of this moulded *adhishṭhāna* is broken at the centre by a flight of three rock-cut steps, the upper two rectangular and the lowermost a *chandra-śilā*—the uppermost forming the sill of the entrance. Flanking either side of this *sōpāna* is a parapet not clearly demarcated into the usual *śurulyāḷi* type and the curve of each terminating with the second oblong step leaving the *chandra-śilā* free in front.

The entrance to the central shrine cut on the top of this *sōpāna* is flanked by two pilasters, one on either side, undifferentiated into shaft, capital and abacus. These simple pilasters also form the jambs of the entrance. On either side of the entrance are two shallow niches containing bas-reliefs of *dvāra-pālas* (pls. XXV B and C). Each *dvāra-pāla* niche is bound on the inside by the jamb-pilaster of the entrance and on the outside by a pilaster cantoning the corner of the shrine projection and similar to the jamb pilaster. The two *dvāra-pālas* face front, but are different from each other in some respects. The northern *dvāra-pāla* has his right hand in *kaṭi*, the left raised and resting by the elbow on the top of the upright club which has a twined serpent. The hand is in *kaṭaka* pose. He wears a *vastra-yajñōpavīta* in the normal fashion and enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas*. Over his *jaṭā-bhāra* is placed a *kirīṭa* with a prominent finial on top. Springing from either side of the *kirīṭa* are two curved horns indicating him to be Śṛingi (or Nandi). The southern *dvāra-pāla* differs from the other in that his torso is turned in semi-profile, right leg slightly bent (in symmetry with the bent left leg of his counterpart) and left planted straight. He rests his bent left hand crossed over to the right with the palm on the top of the upright club, while his right hand hangs down free with the elbow resting over the left palm on top of the club. The club is not entwined by a serpent. He wears a beaded *yajñōpavīta*, heavy *patra-kuṇḍalas* and a coronet round his *jaṭā*. He does not have the two horn-like appendages behind his head.

On the top of the niches and the shrine-entrance runs a common beam, which also forms the lintel of the entrance, and over it a *vājana*-course carrying a projecting curved

kapōta on top. The recessed space over the *kapōta* coming in between the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* and the top of the *kapōta* is blank and without any ornamentation. The *kapōta* likewise is devoid of the *kūḍu*-arches and the *kōṇa-paṭṭa* scroll-work on the corners. The cell cut behind the *maṇḍapa* is square, and its back wall shows traces of old plaster. In the centre of the cell is a tall cylindrical *liṅga* planted in a square *āvuḍaiyār* with its spout facing north. The *liṅga* and *āvuḍaiyār* are separate pieces and not cut out of the same rock as the cave-temple itself, as in the examples found in the Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍya territories.

The two extreme *aṅkaṇas* of the façade were formerly filled up by brick walls, and into the central one was inserted a stone door-frame, all of which were removed recently. The removal of the brick walls on either side has exposed a new Pallava inscription on the front face of the northern pilaster below the Vṛishabhāntika group, which is a record of the fourth year of Vijaya-Dantivikramavarman and mentions the same chief referred to in the inscription of the third year of the same king on the front face of the *kaṭṭu* of the adjacent northern pillar. This inscription refers to the construction of a sluice in the adjoining irrigation tank.

This cave-temple combines some of the special features of the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and Daḷavāṉūr cave-temples. Like them, it shows many advanced features, viz., the *stambha-tōraṇas* as in Daḷavāṉūr but carved over the lateral niches of the façade, the supporting pilasters of which have fully defined capital-components as on the pilasters of the shrine front of the Tiruchirāppaḷḷi cave-temple. There are *taraṅga*-corbels with median *paṭṭa* on the façade-pillars as at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, though the corbels of pillars of the inner row are without *taraṅga*. As at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, the pillar-medallions of the upper and lower *śadurams* are varied, the lower ones being lotuses. Furthermore, instead of the single large Gaṅgādhara group sculpture of Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, this temple has many smaller bas-relief panels on the tops of the façade-pillars in addition to the larger ones in the extreme niches and the *dvāra-pālas* inside. Such an embellishment of pillars with sculpture is reminiscent of the Chāḷukyan examples. The presence of the *taraṅga* on the outer corbels, though the inner ones do not have them, anticipates the cave-temples that followed in Māmalla's time.

Śīyamangalam is the Tamil form *śiya* (Prakrit *sīha*, Sanskrit *siṁha*) of Siṁhamaṅgalam, probably called so after Narasimhavarman I Māmalla, who might have founded the settlement soon after the excavation of the cave-temple. The name *Tūṇāṇḍār* (*Stambhēśvara*) for the god of the place occurs in many inscriptions of the ninth-tenth centuries and after.

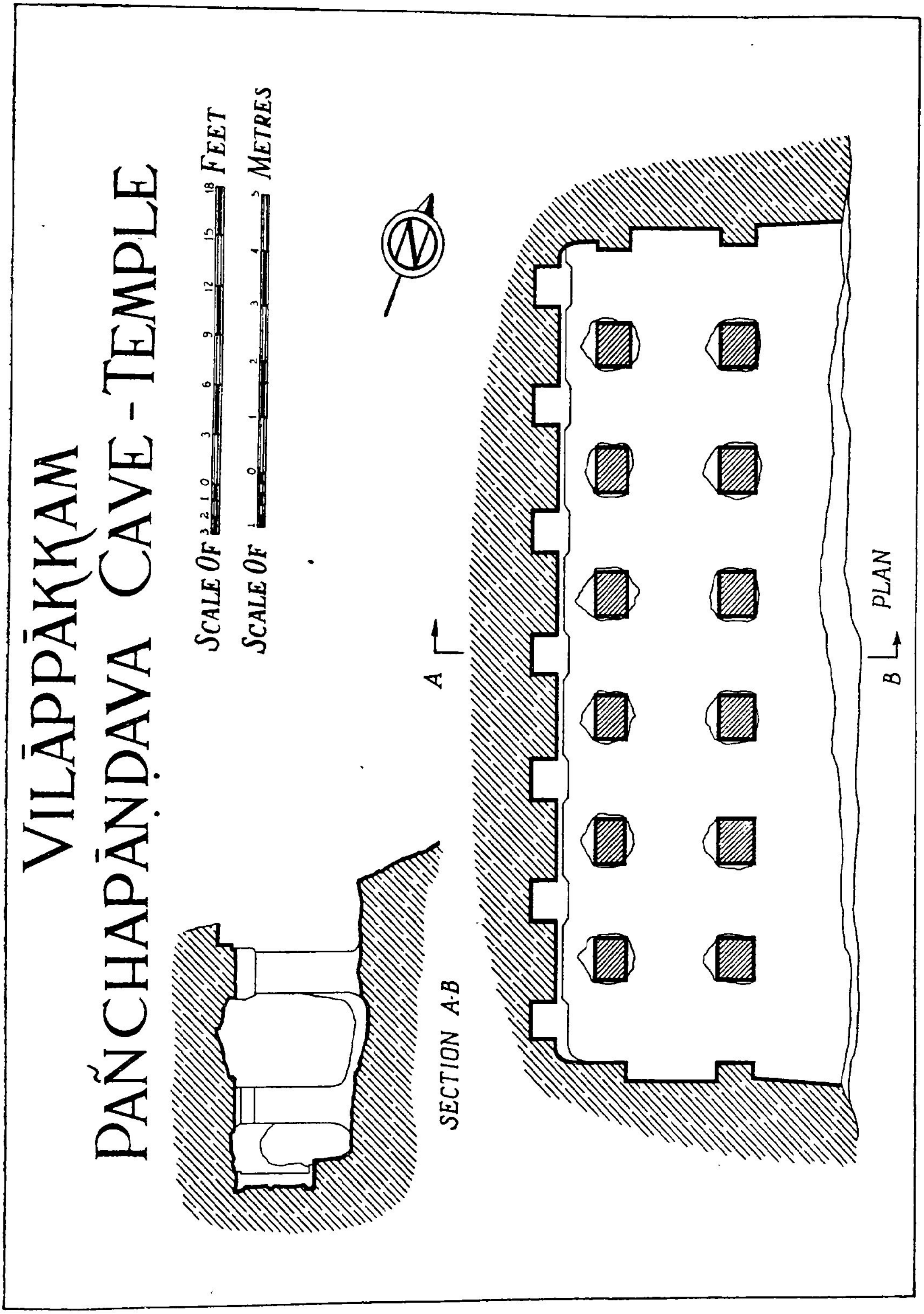
The symbol of the lion refered to above is found on the seal of the copper-plate of early Pallava king Yuvamahārāja Vishṇugōpavarman[1] and other early Pallava copper-plate grants that came from the Āndhra country. The crest of the kings of the Siṁhavishṇu dynasty, particularly the later rulers, was the bull. It is likely the lion continued to be the emblem of the early kings of the Siṁhavishṇu line till the time of Māmalla, as both the bull and lion are sculputred among the *rathas* at Mahābalipuram. Curiously enough the Muddanūr inscription of Telugu-Chōḷa origin has a similar lion.[2]

Vilāppākkam: Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple (fig. 15; pl. XXVI A)

The cave-temple at Vilāppākkam in Walajapet Taluk, North Arcot District, is at a distance of 4 miles south-west of Arcot town. This is a very large excavation on the

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, V, facing p. 50.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1904, no. 406.



VILĀPPĀKKAM
PAÑCHAPĀṆḌAVA CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
A
B
PLAN
SECTION A-B

FIG. 15

eastern face of the large hill which extends north-south at the end of a chain of hillocks starting from Kattivāḍi village, about 3 furlongs to the west of the first hillock with a brick structure on the top of it (a *dargāh* with two minarets). This hillock is called Chinna-Tiruppāmalai, whereas the hillock containing the rock-cut cave-temple at its foot, the tarn and natural cavern with figures of Jaina *tīrthaṅkaras*, *yakshī* and two inscriptions, one of Nandivarman[1] and another of Rājarāja I[2], is called Periya-Tiruppāmalai or Tiruppāṉmalai. The alternate name for this is also Pañchapāṇḍavamalai and this is located within the limits of Periyatakkai hamlet of Vilāppākkam village. It would appear, therefore, that the entire group of hills here, went by the name of Tiruppāmalai (Tiruppāṉmalai of the inscriptions).[3]

The excavation (pl. XXVI A) is very close to the foot of the immense hill and made without any consideration for the enormous weight of the great rock with additional heavy free boulders on top, one of which forms the natural shelter. The floor-level of the cave-temple is at a height of 4½ ft. from the natural ground-level in front of the rock. There appears to have been no provision for a flight of steps. Modern cut-stone masonry steps are built at either end. At a height of 4½ ft. from the ground-level, the sloping rock-surface has been cut back about 6 ft. at the southern end and 4½ ft. at the northern end in order to give a straight and perpendicular surface for the façade of the rock-cut temple facing east. The height of this cutting is about 9 ft. and it is just about 1 ft. deep on the top, resulting in the uncut rock overhanging as an irregular ledge over the façade and serving as a rough cornice. There has been no attempt to cut a regular flexed *kapōta* in front.

The façade is made up of six massive, but square cut pillars of 2½ ft. side, and at either extreme are cut two pilasters of identical design. All the pillars and pilasters have been dressed square and in none of them is found any indication of an attempt to chamfer the corners of the middle portion of the shafts in order to get a pillar with *śadurams* at the base and top and an octagonal *kaṭṭu* in between. The corbels on top have also been roughly blocked out. Particularly, the corbels of the three southern pillars and the northern pilaster have been more or less shaped out with a curved profile. In the other three pillars and the southern pilaster, though the general curved profile has been cut out laterally, the large chunks of rocks are still found in front and behind, awaiting dressing to an even level in comformity with the front face of the pillars and pilasters concerned. The pillars appear to have cracked, even at the commencement of the excavation.

About 6 ft. above the projecting ledge of the excavation is cut an irregularly-curved drip-line starting from about the middle of the cave and running north-south and dipping down at both ends as is usually found over the natural caverns with beds and inscriptions. About 4 ft. above the drip-line is cut a shallow square niche, coming almost above the median line of the cave, containing a low bas-relief of a Jaina *tīrthaṅkara* in the *siddhāsana* pose.

Behind the pillars of the façade and half way inside the excavation is a second row of six pillars and two pilasters rough-cut and shaped as those in the front row, thus dividing the oblong hall into a *mukha-maṇḍapa* in front and a narrower *ardha-maṇḍapa* behind. Judging from the general slope of the extant rock floor from the hind end to the front end,

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, pp. 136-37.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 137 ff.

[3] The proximity of the two villages Vilāppākkam and Kattivāḍi has led Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I (Pondicheri, 1915), p. 47, to locate this rock-cut cave temple in Kattivāḍi village, whereas the other references mention its location as Vilāppākkam.

it would appear that the idea was to have two floor-levels, that of the front *maṇḍapa* being lower by about 3 in. On the hind wall are cut seven oblong shallow niches with their sills placed at a height of about 3 ft. from the floor level in front. There is an oblong bit of rock projecting to a distance of about 6 in. in front, left uncut below the shrine marking evidently the *adhiṣṭhāna* mouldings, indicating that there was no intention of cutting *sōpānas* further. The niches are about $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft. $\times$ $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. and have a depth of about 1 ft. The native rock inside the niches shows blocking out into squares as is usual in rock excavation suggesting that they were to be cut deeper to form cells.

Like the floor below, the ceiling of the two *maṇḍapas* is also uneven though covered by a layer of plaster darkened by thick soot which, if cleaned, may perhaps reveal traces of painting.

Judging from the name of the hill, Tiruppāṉmalai, and also the presence of a large natural cavern, partly converted into a tarn by the construction of a retaining-wall at its southern end, the rest continuing to be a natural cavern (now converted into a Muslim *dargāh*) and the figures of the *yakshī*, Nāganandi and Jaina *tīrthaṅkaras* and their specific mention in the two inscriptions referred to, one can conclude that though unfinished, this cave-temple was a later habitation of the Jainas of the locality. This is confirmed by the remnants of extensive plaster on the ceiling and stucco finishes over the top of the pillars. Perhaps the entire cave was covered by stucco and the uneven parts evened out, thereby to make it fit for a place of worship. This is further confirmed by traces of masonry walls, pottery and old bricks found in the floor in front of the cave suggesting structural additions in front and also by the Jaina bas-relief carved on the top of the cave. Dubreuil's comparison of this cave-temple[1] with the Pallāvaram one does not hold good in all respects, the main differences being that the former is incomplete, whereas the latter is complete; again, the former has seven *aṅkaṇas* between the pillars and pilasters of the façade, and correspondingly in the two *maṇḍapas*, and provision for seven cells, while in the latter there are only five *aṅkaṇas* and only three main and two subsidiary cells behind.

Considering the choice of this hill for the excavation of the cave-temple and on analogy of similar excavations of cave-temples in Mahēndra's time on rocks with Jaina resorts or habitations or places of worship in the form of natural caves and rock-shelters in the Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi (and by the Muttaraiyars and the Pāṇḍyas in the southern districts), this cave-temple may perhaps be ascribed to Mahēndravarman. The excavation probably commenced towards the close of his reign, and its original intended dedication was perhaps to Śiva along with other gods. The cave appears to have been abandoned and the idea of creating a Śiva temple given up owing to the failure of the pillars, making further work unsafe.

From the inscriptions dated in the fiftieth year of Nandippōttaraśar and in the eighth year of Rājarāja Chōḷa I respectively, and also from another inscription of the thirtyeighth year of Parāntaka Chōḷa I[2] on a stone near the Śiva temple in the village of Vilāppākkam, also as confirmed by the Jaina *tīrthaṅkara* figure above it and traces of plaster and paint inside, it is clear that the unfinished cave-temple was used by the Jainas and the place continued to be an importnt Jaina centre from the ninth century (Nandivarman's time) till at least the begining of the eleventh century A.D.

The first inscription refers to the engraving of the image of Poṉṉiyakkiyār (golden

[1] *Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I, p. 47.
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII, no. 56.

yakshī-Jvālamālinī),[1] attended by (or for the residence of) the preceptor Nāganandi[2] by Nāraṇaṉ, son of the Maruttuvar of Pugaḻālaimaṅgalam.

The inscription of Parāntaka in the village which is not very far from the hill proves that during the first half of the tenth century, the Jainas were numerically strong enough in and around Vilāppākkam to require a preceptor in the person of Arishṭanēmi-piḍārar of Tiruppāṉmalai, whose female disciple sunk a well in the village intended for the nunnery (*peṉ-paḷḷi*) of the place. The name of the female disciple, who was a nun, is given as Pattiṉikkurattiyār. The inscription of Rājarāja I to the left of the *tīrthaṅkara* with *chaurī*-bearers has below it a rough weatherworn naked male figure and still below, to its proper left, a standing quadruped—dog or tiger (perhaps the tiger emblem of the Chōḷas). The inscription records that when in the eighth year of Rājarāja, the chief Lāṭarājar Vīra Chōḷar, son of Ilāḍarājar Pugaḻvipragaṇḍar came to worship the god at Tiruppāṉmalai in Peruntimirināḍu of Paḍuvūrkōṭṭam, at the request of his queen, Ilāḍamādēviyār granted tax-exemption for certain *paḷḷichandam* lands.

Aṛagaṇḍanallūr: unfinished cave-temple (fig. 16, pl. XXVI B)

Aṛagaṇḍanallūr is in Tirukkōvilūr Taluk, South Arcot District. The incomplete rock-cut cave-temple, facing almost east, is cut on the eastern scarp of the large rock in the village, on the top of which stands the *gōpuram* and the stone enclosure of the Opporuvarumillāda Nāyanār and Poṉṉiyammaṉ temples.[3] It is on the western side of a large cleft, which is bordered on the east by another rock, which has on its eastern side a natural tarn called *Āykkuḷam*, formed in front of a large natural cavern.

The excavation is almost at the base of the low rock, approached by the narrow valley from the southern side. The original rock-face has been cut back to a depth of about 4 ft. at the bottom and 2 ft. at the top in order to get a perpendicular scarp for the actual excavation of the cave-temple. The overhanging ledge, though regular and wide enough, has not been converted into a well-cut *kapōta*. On the façade are cut four massive square pillars with a pilaster at either end. The pillars and pilasters, though roughly-cut, maintain almost a square section throughout, proportionately shorter when compared with their width which is about 2½ ft. On the top of the pillars are cut the massive corbels with angular profiles with provision for an *uttira* of about the same width as the corbels. Inside there is another row of four pillars and two pilasters of identical dimensions.

The back wall shows an initial blocking out into squares for the cutting of five cells, but none of them has progressed beyond this stage. Even the irregularity of the back wall has not been corrected. The ceiling likewise has not been finished and, therefore, has a very irregular surface. The rock-floor below has been artificially filled up by brick and stone, further covered up by earth and silt. The side walls of both the *maṇḍapas* are also plain, though roughly-cut. This is an example of an unfinished cave-temple where a major

[1] As at Vaḷḷimalai and other places, the *yakshī* cult became prominent among the Jainas of the south.

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, p. 136, n. 6.

[3] Poṉṉiyammaṉ was perhaps the Jaina goddess Jvālāmālinī or Ponniyakki (Ponniyakshi) as at Vilāppākkam, North Arcot District, and in the natural cavern at Vaḷḷimalai, Chittoor District (see *Epigraphia Indica*, IV, pp. 140 ff. and pl.; also XXIX, p. 202)., which were important Jaina centres. This *yakshī* cult became very popular in the south and round about Aragaṇḍanallūr in the vicinity are a number of Jaina centres. This place is referred to in the Tēvaram (II, 77, vv. 2302-12) as Aṛaiyaṉinallūr.

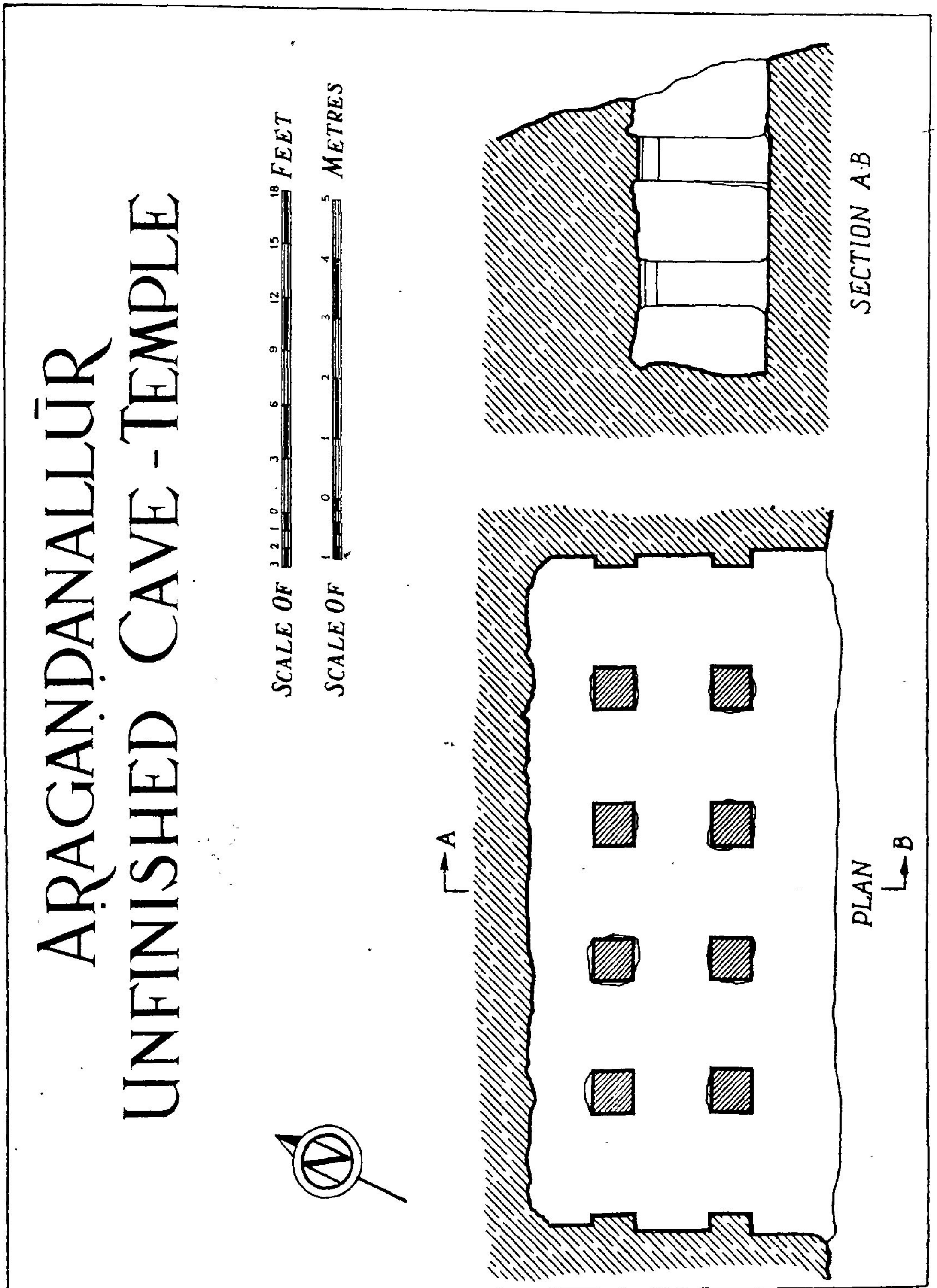

ĀṚAGANḌANALLŪR
UNFINISHED CAVE - TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A·B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 16

part of the excavation was carried out though the last stages of finishing were not taken up.

Judging from the size of the pillars and its location in association with a Jaina resort, the cave-temple may perhaps have been commenced in the time of Mahēndra, but was left unfinished for some unknown reason.

Period II

Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam: Orukal-maṇḍapam cave-temple (fig. 17; pls. XXVII-XXX)

Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam, in Chingleput Taluk and District, is 9 miles from Chingleput on the road to Mahābalipuram. It is also called Pakshitīrtham.

The rock-cut cave-temple here locally called ' Orukal-maṇḍapam ' (meaning ' one-stone ' or monolithic *maṇḍapa*) is excavated at the base of the vertical scarp on the eastern side of an enormous rock which forms the summit of the Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam hill. Both on palaeographical and stylistic grounds, this is to be attributed to the time of Narasiṁha-varman I Māmalla.

The large excavation (pl. XXVII) is recessed about 3 ft. from the outer vertical surface of the rock and at a height of 9 ft. from the top of the rock platform in front, which is a large landing on the flight of steps leading up to the structural temple of Vēdagirīśvara on the summit of the hill. As such, the floor of the cave is made accessible by a rock-cut *sōpāna* which is really composed of two lateral flights of steps reaching a common landing at the top with a large common *śuruḷyāḷi* transverse parapet cut in front. The width of this *sōpāna* and balustrade corresponds to the depth of the rock cutting between the natural rock face outside and the pillared façade.

The excavation consists of two oblong halls placed one behind the other. Beyond the second hall is excavated a cubical shrine-chamber. The front hall corresponds to the *mukha-maṇḍapa*, and the back to the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The façade of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* has two massive cubical pillars dividing the space evenly between the two pilasters *in antis* at either end, and provided with massive brackets or corbels carved over their tops. The front is thus divided into three symmetrical openings. The pilasters at either extreme have a tetragonal section throughout their height, the projecting part being oblong (since they have to simulate pillars half-buried into the wall). The pillars, on the other hand, have the typical Pallava shape, being divided into three sections, the top and bottom *śadurams* 2 ft. square, the intervening portions chamfered to an octagonal *kaṭṭu*. The upper *śaduram* is almost a 2 ft. cube, but the lower one is about 2½ ft. high, the extra half foot being the height of the base. The corbels or *pōtikās* are wide and long and their ends bevelled at an angle of 45° with an angular profile. Over the corbels is carved the beam or *uttira* of the same width and height as the corbels and undemarcated from them. On the top, two successive offsets indicate the other elements of the *prastara*, viz., two flat planks of greater width, the *vājana* and *valabhī*.

At either end of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* are shallow niches, cut into the lateral walls, with two almost identical life-size figures of celestials facing each other (pl. XXVIII). Both of them are two-armed, stand in the same pose and have the same kind of ornaments and accoutrement. Both are in *tribhaṅga* and in the case of the northern figure the right arm is held in adoration or *vismaya*, while the left is placed on the hip in the *kaṭi* pose. In the case of the southern figure, this is reversed; the left is in *vismaya* and the right in *kaṭi*. Both of them wear chord-like *vastra-yajñōpavītas* in the *nivīta*-fashion, but for which they may be called portrait-sculptures. The northern figure wears a large *patra-kuṇḍala* in his left ear-lobe and a number of rings or *makara-kuṇḍalas* in his pendant right ear-lobe. For

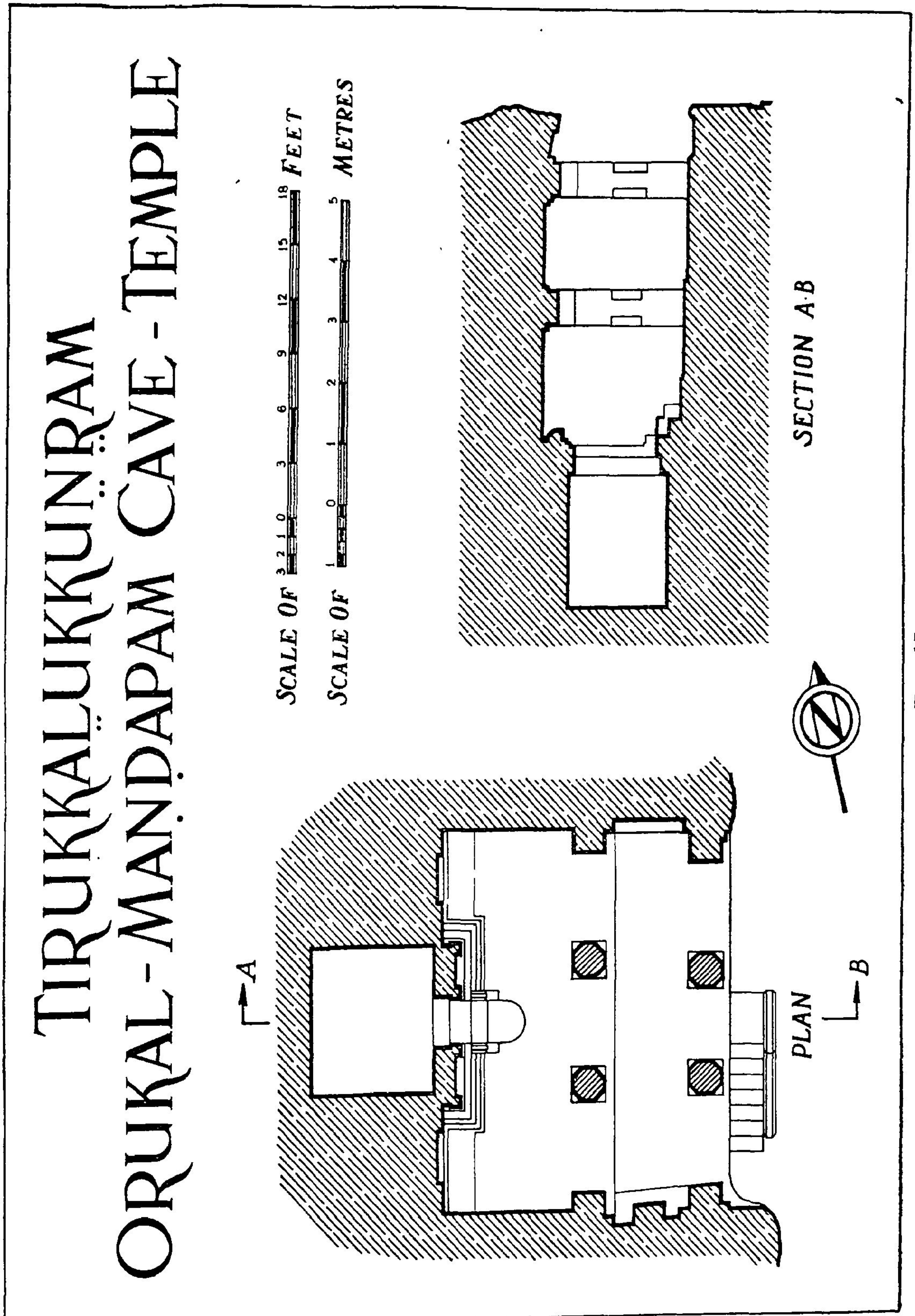

TIRUKKALUKKUNRAM
ORUKAL-MANDAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A·B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 17

symmetry, the ear-ornaments are reversed in the case of the southern figure. Both of them have *jaṭā-makuṭas* raised above the head with ornaments on them. The other notable ornaments are *hāra* round the neck, *bāhuvalayas* above the elbows and *valayas* round the wrists and *udara-bandha*. The upper cloth is tied loosely round the waist like a sash forming two loose loops, knotted on sides of the hip, the fan-wise folded ends hanging down in tassels. Except for the slightly larger face and heavier chin of one of them, both these figures of celestial adorers are similar.

The floor-level of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is slightly raised by about 2 in. over the level of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* and its front has also an identical set of two pillars and two pilasters, each standing directly behind the corresponding columns of the façade of the *mukha-maṇḍapa*. The extreme pilasters are likewise uniformly four-sided in section from base to top, while the two pillars are divided into three sections, viz., two *śadurams* and the intervening *kaṭṭu*. The *pōtikā* is of the same type as in the front row, as is also the beam. Over the beam is placed a second thinner member of larger width, so that it projects as an offset on all sides below the ceiling. This single plank or *vājana*, occurring in the place of the double-plank course over the beam of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* is evidently to compensate for the higher floor-level of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* inasmuch as the ceilings of both the *maṇḍapas* are to be on the same level. The ceilings in both the *maṇḍapas* are plain and even. The two extreme end walls of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* are without sculptures.

Projecting prominently from the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is carved the frontage of the *garbha-gṛiha* or inner shrine (pl. XXIX). This projection (about 2 ft. at the base) shows all the architectural features of a structural temple, namely, *adhishṭhāna*, *bhitti*, *kuḍya-stambha* and portions of the *prastara* up to the *kapōta*. This shrine-front is divided almost symmetrically into three equal parts by the central shrine-opening or doorway to the *garbha-gṛiha* with two niches one on either side containing comparatively less finely carved bas-reliefs of the conventional type of *dvāra-pālas*. Since the floor-level of the shrine is higher than that of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, a *sōpāna* of three steps is cut in front of the shrine-doorway projecting well in front of the mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna* of the shrine-front and flanked on either side by curved parapets of a simple type (i.e., not with the *vyāla-or makara*-face, from which a proboscis issues), the lowermost step being more than a semi-circle and standing for the *chandra-śilā*. The *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings have the usual *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda* with two *kampa*-courses, one above and another below it, *paṭṭikā* and *prati*. Externally the front side of the shrine at the level of the wall-base measures 10½ ft. long and the width as exposed on the sides is 1 ft. 9 in., the measurements almost corresponding to those of a square *kshudra-vimāna*. The wall-portion has four pilasters of square section throughout, the two in the centre forming as it were the jambs of the shrine-doorway and the one at either extreme flanking the niche of the side. The top portions of these pilasters are not demarcated into the usual architectural components of the 'order', but the *pōtikās* are directly placed on their tops. The *pōtikās*, like those of the larger pillars and pilasters in front, are plain bevelled corbels. Over the *pōtikās* runs the *uttirappadai* in two series, the *uttira* and *vājana*, above which projects the *kapōta*, with a well-defined external flexture but devoid of the usual ornamentations of *kūḍus* and small circles or lotus-medallions along the edge. The two corners alone are faintly ornamented by scroll-work (*kōṇapaṭṭa*), that on the southern side being undamaged and clear. Over the *kapōta* runs a plain beam or blocking course, the *āliṅga-paṭṭikā* without any ornamentation like the *vyālavari*. Between the pilasters on either side of the main entrance, in the two shallow niches, are carved the two *dvāra-pālas* in comparatively low relief (pls. XXIX and XXX A and B). The *dvāra-pālas* are two-armed, in semi-profile and in *tribhaṅga*, their heads facing front, *yajñopavīta* in the *nivīta*-fashion, their inner arms resting on clubs, the one on the north leaning more on the club than the other, the outer in *kaṭi*, the heads adorned by heavy

jaṭā-bhāras; both are devoid of the two horns. The shrine-cell itself is almost cubical and contains a cylindrical *liṅga* inserted into the floor, subsequently, with an *āvuḍaiyar* in two pieces (upper and lower) slipped over the *liṅga* so that only its top third is visible.

On the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and on either side of the projecting shrine-front are two shallow niches, the one on the south containing a bas-relief of Brahmā, while the other on the north has one of Vishṇu (pls. XXX A and B). The presence of these bas-reliefs of Brahmā and Vishṇu is in contrast to the earlier Mahēndra temples. Brahmā is four-armed and has four faces (three visible in the relief). He is standing in *tribhaṅga*, the lower right hand is in *kaṭi*, the upper right holding what appears to be a *kalaśa*, the upper left holding the *akshamālā* and the lower left holding a lotus. The *yajñōpavīta* is worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion; the hair on top is bound up into a huge top-knot or *jaṭā-bandha*, part of which covers the ears as a *jaṭā-bhāra*, a style of coiffure which is quite different from what is given to Brahmā in other Pallava sculptures. There are *makara-kuṇḍalas* in both the pendant ear-lobes of the front face touching the shoulders. The *vastra* reaches the ankles with a central pleated fold tucked behind (*kachchha*). Vishṇu, likewise, is four-armed, stands in *tribhaṅga*, the upper right hand holding the *chakra* with the edge turned front (*prayōga*), upper left holding the *śaṅkha*, the lower right holding a lotus and the lower left in *kaṭi*. He wears a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* and has the same type of *makara-kuṇḍalas* as Brahmā. The *yajñōpavīta* is in the *nīvīta*-fashion and the *vastra* is worn reaching up to the ankles with an *uttarīya* tied round the waist in loose loops with tassels and folds as in the case of Brahmā. These tall figures of Brahmā and Vishṇu and the still finer figures at either end of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* are features which distinguish this cave-temple from those of Mahēndra at Maṇḍagappaṭṭu and Pallāvaram and even his later creations at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, Daḷavāṉūr and Śiyamaṅgalam, excepting the Gaṅgādhara panel at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi. The figures here bear a greater resemblance to those on the monolithic *rathas* at Mahābalipuram and these alone will suggest that the Orukal-maṇḍapa on the hill at Tirukkaḻukuṉṟam was executed in the time of Vātāpikoṇḍa Narasiṁhavarman I, in whose time the *rathas* at Mahābalipuram are supposed to have been commenced.[1]

The other remarkable features about this cave-temple in addition to the sculptures, are the lesser width of the pillars than in the Mahēndra caves, the shape of the corbels, which, in other cave-temples attributed to Mahēndravarman, have a curved profile or a more obtuse cut and the presence of the *valabhī*-moulding over the *vājana* above the beam. It is to be noted that while the central shrine does not have the bas-relief or stone sculptures of the principal deity as is also the case in Mahēndra cave-temples, sculpturing of the attendant deities as bas-reliefs on the *maṇḍapa* walls outside had commenced in the time of Māmalla, as would be clear in the case of this temple and the other cave-temples and *rathas* of Māmalla.

The most important inscription in early Tamil of the Pallava period mentioning Vātāpikoṇḍa Narasiṁhavarman is found on the top of the northern inner pillar.[2]

The inscription of Narasiṁhavarman I reads:

1 *Śrī-Tirukkaḻuk*[*ku*] *ṉ* [*ṟa*]*ttu Pe*[*ru*]*māṉ-*

2 *ṉaḍigaḷḷu*[*k*]*ku Kaḷa*[*t*]*tūr-kōṭṭat-*

3 [*tu*] *taṉ-kūṟṟu* [*Tirukkaḻukku*]*ṉṟa-*

[1] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1909, pp.. 76-77, para 15.

[2] All the other available space on the pillars as well as the side walls are filled by signatures of the Dutchmen, who occupied this cave in the second half of the seventeenth century, many of them bearing dates like 1671, 1681, etc.

4 *[ttu] Śrīmalaimēl*

5 *[Mū]lattānattu Perumāṉ-*

6 *ṉaḍigaḷukku vaḷippāṭṭup[pu]ṟam-[ā]-*

7 *ga Vātāpikoṇḍa-Narasiṅgap-*

8 *pōtta[ra*] śar vay[t*] tadu* [॥*][1]

There has been some confusion with regard to the dating of this cave-temple on the basis of this inscription and the identification of Tirumūlasthāna temple on the hill referred to in this inscription and in a later Rājakesari (Āditya Chōḷa), A.D. 870-907, inscription found on the wall of a late Pallava apsidal temple facing south in the centre of the village at the foot of the hill. Read with this early Chōḷa inscription, it would be clear that the present inscription of Vātāpikoṇḍa Narasiṅga-p-pōttaraiyar (Narasiṁhavarman Pallava I, A.D. 630-668) is a record of the renewal by Narasiṁha I, of a former gift to the Mūlasthāna temple or rather its confirmation, since the early Chōḷa inscription in the temple down below records the interesting fact of a second renewal by Āditya I, of a grant originally made by king Skandaśishya and renewed for the first time by Vātāpikoṇḍa Narasiṁhavarman I, the renewal by Āditya for a second time being the result of a request made by a certain Puttan. This was evidently rendered necessary when Āditya Chōḷa conquered the Pallava territory in the later Pallava times as is clear from his title *Toṇḍaināḍu-pāvina*, which must have happened in about A.D. 890 and the conqueror had to reconfirm the gift made initially by a former king and subsequently confirmed by another of the preceding dynasty. This reconfirmation had to be done as requested by a local chief.

The inscription reads as follows:—

1 *Svasti Śrī[।*] Kōv-Irājakēsariparmma[r*]kku yāṇḍu i-*

2 *rupatt-ēḻāvadu [।*]Ka[ḷa] ttūr-kkōṭṭattu=ttaṉ-kūṟṟu-*

3 *[t] Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟattu Śrī-Mūlasthānattu perumāṉ-a*

4 *ḍi [gaḷu] kku iṟ[ai]y=iliy=āga Skandaśishyan kuḍuttamaiy-*

5 *[il a] ppa [ḍi] yē Pādāvi-koṇḍa Narasiṁgappōt-*

6 *taraiyaruṁ apparisē rakshittamaiyil Aṇḍūṟaiya-*

7 *ṉ Guṇavaṉ magan Puttaṉ viṇṇappattiṉāl pūrvva-*

8 *rājākkaḷ [vai] tta paḍiyē vaittēṉ=Irājakē [sa] ripa-*

9 *rummaṉēṉ* [।] *i-ddharmmam rakshittāṉ-aḍi eṉ muḍi meliṉa* [॥*][2]

'Hail! Prosperity! In the twentyseventh year of king Rājakēsarivarman: Whereas Skandaśishya had given tax-free (lands) to the lord of the holy Mūlasthāna at Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam in Kaḷattur-kōṭṭam (division) and in the sub-division of the same name (i.e., Kaḷattūr-kūṟṟam) (and) as accordingly Narasiṅga-p-pōttaraiyar, the conqueror of Vātāpi, had protected (confirmed) it, I, Rājakēsarivarman, at the request of Puttan, son of Guṇavan of Aṇḍuṟai, do hereby maintain the same as the former kings have maintained it. May the feet of the person who protects the charity be on my head.'

While editing the Chōḷa inscription, at a time when the Pallava inscription was not discovered, Venkayya in the first introductory paragraph confuses the location of the two structural temples one on the hill and the other at the foot of the hill as Bhaktavatsalēśvara and Vēdagirīśvara and locates this and the three other inscriptions that he edits as on the wall of the strong room (*tiru-ābharaṇa-k-koṭṭil*) of the Vedagirīśvara temple. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the Vēdagirīśvara is the temple on the hill and the

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 16; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1932-33, p. 55.

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, III, p. 277 ff.

Bhaktavatsalēśvara, in the precincts of which the inscriptions are found, is at the foot of the hill. This confusion has obviously led S. R. Balasubrahmanyan[1] to identify the Mūlasthāna with the apsidal shrine (now used as the strong room) in the Bhaktavatsalēśvara temple complex, which according to him was built in early Chōḷa times, in place of the brick and timber original on the spot. It is stated that, 'It cannot as confidently be asserted which the Mūlasthāna temple was that received the original grant from Skandaśishya'. 'The central shrine of the Vēdagirīśvara temple on the summit of the hill is built of three huge blocks of stone which form its inner walls. On these are cut many figures, Sōmāskanda, between Brahmā and Vishṇu with Mārkaṇḍēya below on the west wall, Yōga-Dakshiṇāmūrti and two ṛishis on the north wall, and Nandikēśvara and Chaṇḍikēśvara on the south wall. It is not unlikely that the Vēdagirīśvara shrine, which is apparently very ancient, is identical with the Mūlasthāna temple referred to in the early Tamil records of Rājakēsarī, in the Bhaktavatsalēśvara and of Narasiṁhavarman I, in the Orukal-maṇḍapa. It may also be that the neglected *liṅga* of the Orukal-maṇḍapa represents the original Mūlasthāna. In any case, the Mūlasthāna temple to which Śkandaśishya made a grant was the earliest temple in the Tamil country and was situated somewhere in Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam'.[2] It is also suggested[3] that the Orukal-maṇḍapa (cave-temple) must have been excavated in the time of Narasiṁhavarman I.

Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1932-33, II, pp. 54-55 again states— 'the inscriptions at Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam mention the god Mūlattānattu Perumānaḍigal and this is supposed to refer to the deity on the hill. In a record of the present collection (no. 160) belonging to the 34th year of Kō-Pēruñjiṅgadēva the god is called "Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟa-muḍaiya-nāyanār, residing on the hill". There are at present two temples on the hill, *viz.*, the Vēdagirīśvara temple on the top and the rock-cut temple called the Orukal-maṇḍapa a little below it. It has been suggested that the latter temple must have been excavated in the time of Narasiṁhavarman I (A.R.E. 1909, p. 75). There are no early inscriptions in the Vēdagirīśvara temple on the hill to determine its age and later additions to this structure have been so effected as to obscure its antiquity altogether. The central shrine of this temple is square in shape and is formed of three huge blocks of stone with figures carved in relief on the inner faces. The figures are noted in A.R.E. 1907, p. 76 and from their style, majestic appearance and bold relief have been assigned to the Pallava period. But the fact that the temple is not a rock-cut one makes it difficult to identify this with the Mūlasthāna temple which was patronized by the Pallava king Narasiṁhavarman, the conqueror of Vātāpi and later by the Chōḷa king Rājakēsarivarman. It is possible that Narasiṁhavarman constructed the cave-temple and made endowments for the original god of Mūlasthāna which was in worship since the time of Skandaśishya and which he now consecrated in the new cave-temple. This view is strengthened by the fact that the inscription in this rock-cut temple (65/1909) refers to the god of the Mūlasthāna on the hill and in fact this is the earliest epigraph in the village referring to the deity.'

In *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, pp. ii and iii, Venkatasubbayyar states that 'the temple of Mūlasthānattu Perumānaḍigaḷ may be identified with the Orukal-maṇḍapa in the place from a reference made to the former (A.R. 65/1909) belonging to Vātāpikoṇḍa Narasiṁhavarman'. Further, in spite of the fact that Skandaśishya and Narasiṁha the original donor and the first person who confirmed the grant subsequently being specifically

[1] *Journal of the Madras University*, XIV, pp. 19 ff.
[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1909, pp. 76-77.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

mentioned by Rājakēsari in his inscription as former kings (*pūrvarājakkaḷ*), Venkatasubbayyar tries to equate the original donor Skandaśishya with Skandaśēna, the excavator of the Vallam cave-temple in the time of Mahēndra by saying that the suffixes *śishya* and *sēna* coming after the common prefix *Skanda* of the two names are identical in meaning. (The editor in the foot-note remarks that this is not convincing). On the basis of the equation, he attributes the Orukal-maṇḍapa also to Mahendra. But this overlooks the fact that Skandasēna the excavator of the Vallam cave declares in his own inscription that he was the son of the servant of king Mahēndravarman (above, pp. 61-62), while Rājakēsari refers to Skandaśishya as a former king.

In view of the above conflicting interpretations and conclusions, a re-examination of the whole case in the present context seems necessary. As stated earlier, the cave-temple is to be attributed to Māmalla or Narasiṁhavarman I on architectural and sculptural evidences. The mention of his title, Vātāpikoṇḍa, proves that the inscription was later than the conquest of Vātāpi, which he occupied according to his Bādāmi inscription[1] in the twelfth year (A.D. 642). Even if he had started the excavation early in his reign, which is unlikely owing to his preoccupation in the Chāḷukyan wars, the completion of the cave-temple and his inscription there must have been after that event.

The temple and the god on the top of the hill are praised by the three Śaiva saints in their hymns—by Appar or Tirunāvukkaraśu[2], Sambandhar[3] and Sundarar[4]. It is commonly known that in spite of the supposed contemporaneity of the two earlier saints with Mahēndra, they have not sung about his novel creation, the cave-temples, but have sung only in praise of the traditionally-established older temples existing in their times in various parts of the Tamil country. Further, Appar, who is taken to be the elder contemporary of Mahendra I, has in his hymn mentioned the 'god on top of the hill', referring thereby to the present Vēdagirīśvara which existed even from earlier times as a brick-and-mortar temple. It must have been replaced later by a slab-megalithic type construction with Pallava bas-relief sculptures including Sōmaskanda, which is found only in temples of Paramēśvara I, Rājasiṁha and their successors. The slab temple should therefore have been built in the time of Paramēśvaravarman I, who belonged to the third generation after Narasiṁha I. The original brick or timber temple had a gift made by a former Pallava monarch Skanda-śishya, who is known from the Sanskrit charters. Narasiṁha I, obviously confirmed the gift to the already-existing temple, which was perhaps recorded originally in copper-plates or *cadjan* leaf and in order to perpetuate it, inscribed it on stone in the cave-temple that he excavated, a little below the summit, and in doing so made his own temple a joint beneficiary. This would be clear from the mention of Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟattu-perumā-naḍikaḷ in the first two lines and again Śrī Malaimēl Mūlattānattu-perumānaḍikaḷ in the fourth, fifth and sixth lines. The former meaning 'to the Lord of Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟam' and the latter meaning 'to the Lord of the Mūlasthāna (original shrine) on top of the holy hill' in favour of both of whom the grant was confirmed (as the dative termination *ku* after both the names and the individual prefix of *śrī* in both the cases would indicate), clearly show that the gift that he remade was for two temples and their gods. Thus, the god of his own cave-temple was called the Lord of Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟam and the god of the earlier temple extant in his time on the top of the hill as the Mūlasthāna Perumānaḍikaḷ. The relevant part of the inscription can, therefore, be translated as follows:

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, XI, pt. i, no. 1.
[2] *Tēvāram*, VI, 81, vv. 7151-52.
[3] *Ibid.*, I, 103, vv. 1112-21.
[4] *Ibid.*, VII, 81, vv. 8046-55.

'Gift made as *valipāltuppuram* (lands for the conduct of worship) by Vātāpikonda Narasinga-p-pōttaraiyar to Śrī-Perumānadikal of Tirukkalukkunram (Lord of Tirukkalukkunram) and to Śri-Malaimēl Mūlattānattu Perumānadikal (the lord of the Śri-Mūlattānam on the hill) in Kalattūr-kōttam (division) and in the sub-division (*kūrru*) of the same name'.

It is significant to note that neither this inscription nor the Chōla inscription in the temple at the foot of the hill mentions the name and extent of the land under gift, though the nature of the gift being lands is indicated by the term *valipāttu-p-puram* (*puram*-free-hold-endowed land for temple) and *iraiyili* (tax-free land). The Chōla inscription was evidently made in confirmation of the acts of both the royal donors, as it specifically states, viz., the original gift to the then sole existing temple, by Skandaśishya, and its renewal with modification to include his own cave-temple by Narasiṁha. This was naturally engraved in the earliest stone temple at the foot of the hill, extant in the time of Āditya, viz., the apsidal shrine of late Pallava construction now a disused structure converted into a strong room in the modern Bhaktavatsala temple-complex.

Mahābalipuram: Kōtikal-mandapam cave-temple (fig. 18; pl. XXXI)

This excavation is at the north-west extremity of the main hill at Mahābalipuram, Chingleput Taluk and District at which point it is of very low height, a little to the south-west of the Trimūrti cave and the large circular monolithic cistern called the 'Gōpī's Churn'. Since the face of the rock into which the cave-temple, facing west, is cut had a decided slope, the façade of the cave had to be well-recessed, the recessing at the bottom from the original line of the rock-base exceeding 9 ft., while at the top it is about 1½ ft. This cutting-in had been made to a depth sufficient to give a scarp of the desired height, leaving only about 3 ft. of rock above as a natural crest. The natural contour of the overhang at the top is curved, but there has been no attempt to work it out into a *kapōta* even externally.

The excavation (pl. XXXI A) consists of an oblong hall facing west, with a square shrine cut on its back wall, the shrine-front projecting 3 ft. into the *ardha-mandapa*. Thus, this temple consists of a shrine and its *ardha-mandapa* only and perhaps had a structural *mukha-mandapa*, judging from the oblong pillar-sockets on the rock-floor in front of the façade and the ten mortise-holes cut on the curved surface of the rock above the cornice-like overhang for reception of the joist-ends.

The façade consists of two pillars and two pilasters, the pilasters at either extreme having a tetragonal section throughout, without any demarcation into the two *śadurams* above and below and the *kattu* in between. The pillars are, however, well-demarcated into two *śadurams* and *kattu*, the upper *śaduram* being a perfect cube of 1 ft. 9 in., while the lower has a height exceeding 1 ft. 9 in., the extra small height being an allowance for the height of its own undemarcated base or *ōma*. The corbels on the top are of the plain bevelled type with an angular profile, their length three times the width of the pillars. Over the corbels is cut imperceptibly the *uttira*, the height of the *uttira* and corbel together equalling the height of the *śaduram*, i.e., 1 ft. 9 in. Over the *uttira* runs a thinner and wider plank, which is visible as an offset all round the ceiling inside and also externally over the top of the beam as the *vājana*-course.

The shrine-front, projecting into the *ardha-mandapa*, has all the architectural features and mouldings of a structural temple (pls. XXXI B and C). It has an *adhishthāna* consisting of *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripatta-kumuda*, *kampa*, *kantha* and *kampa*, with a flat plain *pattikā* and *prati* on the top. The height of the *adhisthāna* is equal to the height of the *śaduram*, i.e.,

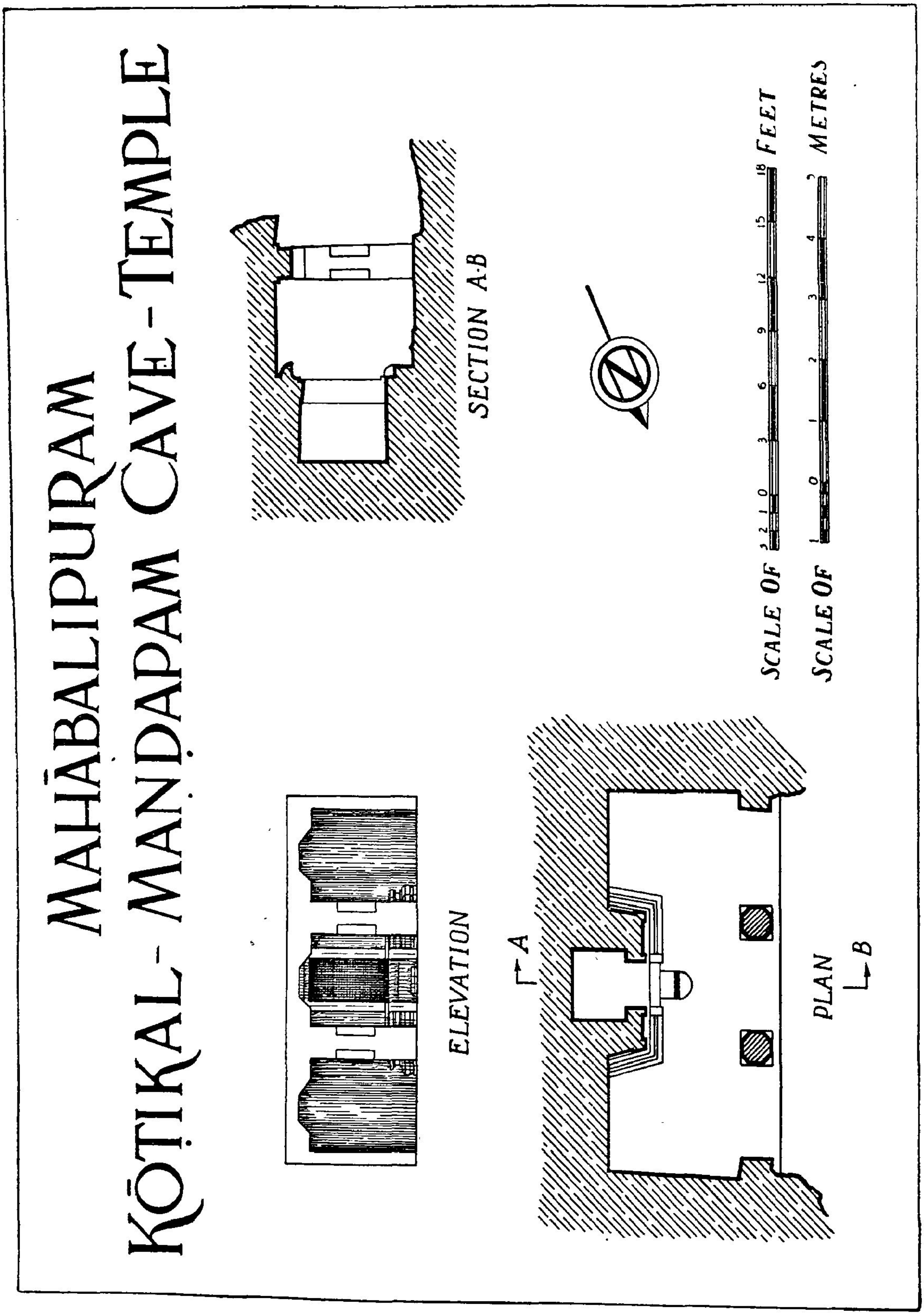

MAHĀBALIPURAM
KŌṬIKAL-MANḌAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SECTION A-B
ELEVATION
A
PLAN
B
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES

FIG. 18

1 ft. 9 in. The projection of the shrine from the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is slightly uneven, being 3 ft., on the northern and 2½ ft. on the southern side, and, as such, the front line of the shrine is not parallel to the line of the façade. This was obviously in order to correct the natural oblique lie of the face of the rock and get the due west orientation. Over the *adhishṭhāna* is cut out the wall-faces of the shrine, both frontal and lateral. In front, the centre of the wall-face is pierced by a door-opening, behind which is cut an almost square *garbha-gṛiha.* This entrance has a clearly-marked door-frame, consisting of the two jambs, the lintel on the top and the sill at the bottom. In this respect, it is unlike its counterpart in the Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam and many other earlier Mahēndra caves, where there is no clear jamb, a pilaster with corbel taking its place. At either extreme of the shrine-front and cantoning the corners forming the outer boundary of the *dvāra-pāla* niches are two tetragonal pilasters, which, curiously enough, do not carry corbels on the top. Over the lintel of the doorway and the tops of these cantoning pilasters runs a beam with a second member or *valabhī* above, projecting out (taking the place of the *bhūtavari* or similar friezes in the structural temples), on the top of which the *kapōta* projects in a very well-marked way (about 7 in.) . In the front line of this *kapōta* and coming above each of the *dvāra-pāla* niches is a *kūḍu*-arch of the typical Pallava type but its centre is plain and does not contain the head of a *gaṇa* as in other cases.

The two shallow oblong niches on either side of the door-jamb have bas-relief sculptures of *dvāra-pālikās* in the frontal aspect. They are essentially similar to each other in ornament and accoutrement but slightly differ in their poses as well as in the type of weapons they carry. The northern *dvāra-pālikā* wears an enormous *patra-kuṇḍala* in her right ear-lobe and a bunch of *kuṇḍalas* or rings in her pendant left ear-lobe dangling over her left shoulder. The southern *dvāra-pālikā* wears an equally large *patra-kuṇḍala* in her left ear-lobe, while from her right pendant ear-lobe hangs a flower-cluster almost reaching her right breast. Both of them wear *jaṭā-makuṭas* with ornaments on them, *hāras* and *kucha-bandhas* and round the waist in addition to the *kaṭi-bandha* that secures the thin *vastra* which reaches down to the ankles, a loose girdle of pleated cloth with a looping front, secured by a knot on the outer hip with the folds hanging down. The northern *dvāra-pālikā* has her left leg crossed over the right in front, her left elbow resting on a narrow but tall shield-plate, while in her right hand she holds a large *khaḍga.* The southern *dvāra-pālikā* is in graceful *tri-bhaṅga*, her left arm in *kaṭi* and right upraised and holding the top of a bow planted in front of her, the lower end of the bow held firmly by the toes of her slightly upraised right foot. These two sculptures would indicate clearly that the shrine was dedicated to Durgā. Their slim forms and graceful poses resemble those of other known Māmalla sculptures and among them show rather earlier features particularly in the form of the crown. In front of the shrine-entrance reaching down from the top of the sill to the floor-level of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is a *sōpāna* of three steps and a *chandra-śilā* below. The two curved parapets on either side as well as the lower step have been subsequently cut away. There is no sculpture of the principal deity in the shrine-cell. Evidently it was a painting or stucco relief.

While the *kapōta* over the shrine-entrance with *kūḍu*-arches (though without the figure heads inside) are indications of the later Mahēndra period, the form of the sculptures of the *dvāra-pālikās*, and particularly the comparative thinness of the pillars of the façade and the absence of the sculpture of the principal deity inside the shrine would show that this cave-temple is, on stylistic grounds alone, to be attributed to the earlier part of the reign of Māmalla. The monolith called the Draupadī-ratha, dedicated to Durgā and containing a bas-relief of Durgā in the shrine has *dvāra-pālikās* similar to those of the Koṭikal maṇḍapam.

On the front face of the top *śaduram* of the southern pillar is a single-line Pallava-Grantha inscription in seventh-century script,[1] reading *śrī-Vāmāṅkuśa*, which is neither one of the known epithets of Mahēndravarman nor of Māmalla. It appears to be the title of a chieftain, perhaps subordinate to the Pallavas, who excavated the cave-temple.[2]

Śiṅgapērumāḷ-kōil: Narasiṁha cave-temple (fig. 19)

The rock-cut Śiṅgapērumāḷ-kōil in the village of the same name in Chingleput Taluk and District , 30 miles south of Madras, called Naraśiṅga-Viṇṇagaram in its later inscriptions, is in worship. The rock-cut portion has been added to and obscured in front by a series of later structural *maṇḍapas*, the outermost *maṇḍapa* having its main opening on the south.

The cave-temple itself is a small one, excavated almost into the vertical scarp on the eastern face of a low rock, the excavation recessed about a foot from the rock-face at the bottom. It consists of an oblong *ardha-maṇḍapa* with a shrine, also oblong, behind. The façade of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is made up of two massive pillars in the centre and two pilasters, one at either extreme. While the two pilasters retain their cubical section throughout, the pillars are typically divided into three parts, *śadurams* at the base and top and octagonal *kaṭṭu* in between. The *śadurams* at the base are slightly less than 2 ft. square and thinner than in the typical Mahēndra pillars; the lower *śadurams* are tall even after allowing for the short height of the base and the *kaṭṭu* is as tall as the lower *śaduram*. The upper *śaduram* is shorter than its sides. The beam on the top is of the same thickness as the corbel, which is about half the height of the upper *śaduram*. The rock-ledge projecting on the top is broken at places where the structural *maṇḍapa* joins it and externally its irregular surface is neither shaped into a *kapōta* nor ornamented by *kūḍus*. The corbel is bevelled with a definite angular profile.

Over the corbels of the façade runs a plain beam or *uttira*. Below the rough *kapōta* and above the main beam is cut a wider, but thinner plank which projects on the inside of the ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* as a *vājana*-course. This *vājana* is projected externally also below the rough *kapōta*.

There are inscriptions on the front face of the top *śaduram* of the northern pillar, perhaps of the time of Rājarāja Chōḷa. The southern pillar also contains an inscription which is obscured by the cross-wall.[3] The floor of the shrine is at a higher level, reached

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[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, X, p. 18.

[2] The title appears to be that of one of the Telugu-Chōḷa kings, who were contemporary rulers of the adjoining Rēnāḍu and Muṇḍa-rāshṭra. As rulers occupying the territory between the Chāḷukyas and Pallavas, they often bore titles similar to those of the Chāḷukyas or Pallavas according to their alternating allegiance to the two powers. The same was done by the Muttaraiyars of the south occupying the territory round Tanjāvūr between the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas. *Aṅkuśa* is more a Chāḷukyan surname. There was a later Telugu-Chōḷa king, Chōḷa-Mahārāja Kumārāṅkuśa in the time of Nandivarman Pallava, the *ājñāpti* of the Velūrpāḷayam copper-plates (*South Indian Inscriptions*, II, pp. 507-10; also XII, no. 49). Ballaya-Chōḷa of the Karikāla family (Telugu-Chōḷa) bore the title 'Kumārāṅkuśa', *Journal of Indian History*, XV, p. 258. Sivaramamurti —*Māhābalipuram* (New Delhi, 1952) p. 31 ascribes this cave-temple to Mahēndra, while earlier he says that Mahābalipuram rose to prominence in the time of Māmalla, following Dubreuil (*Pallava Antiquities*, I, pp. 60-61).

[3] These two inscriptions do not seem to have been copied or published, the only inscription, damaged and incomplete, noticed so far being 481 of 1920, on the rock behind the Āṇḍāḷ shrine in the temple dated in the eighth year of Rājarāja Chōḷa I, which gives the name of Narasiṅga-Viṇṇagaram to the temple in Śeṅguṉṟam (old name of Śiṅgapērumāḷ-kōil village) in Śeṅguṉṟa-nāḍu. The god is referred to as Narasiṅga-Viṇṇagara-dēvar.

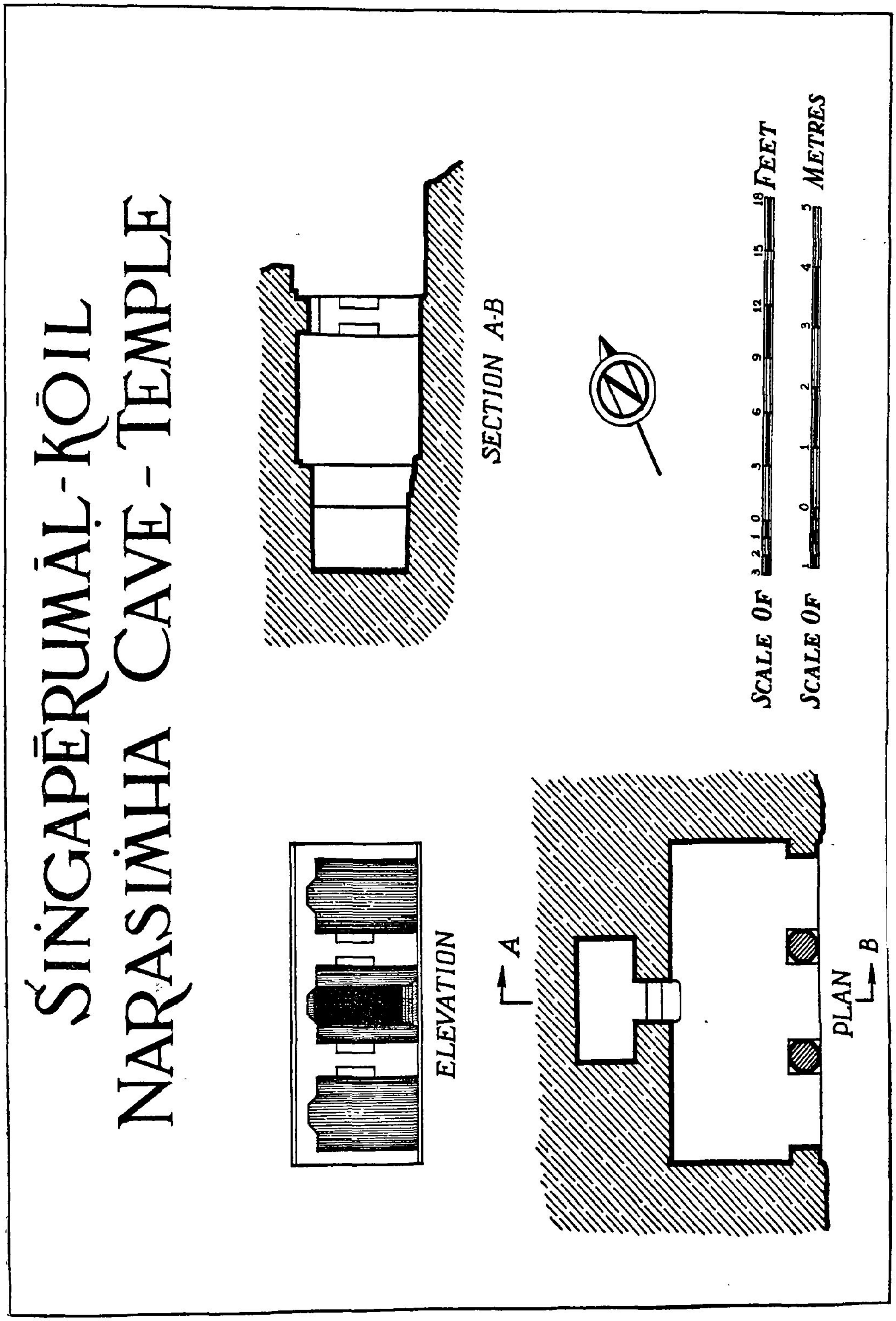
ŚIṄGAPĒRUMĀḶ-KŌIL
NARASIṀHA CAVE-TEMPLE
SECTION A-B
ELEVATION
PLAN
A
B
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES

FIG. 19

by a flight of two irregular oblong steps formed by the sill itself. The shrine-door is a simple oblong opening cut through the wall without jambs or lintel. The back wall of the *maṇḍapa* is also plain without any pilasters or *dvāra-pāla* niches; nor are there any *dvāra-pālas.*

The shrine-cell is oblong and contains a large stucco image of a seated four-armed Narasiṁha, the upper right hand holding *chakra* (not in *prayōga*) and the upper left *śaṅkha*—both of them with flames,—the lower right in *abhaya* and the lower left in *kaṭi.* While the right knee is bent resting on the seat, the left is slightly stretched forward in front of the seat resting on a lotus at its base. This stucco does not seem to cover a bas-relief cut on the back wall.

This cave-temple is to be assigned to the period between Māmalla and Paramēśvaravarman on architectural merits.

Śiṅgavaram: Raṅganātha cave-temple (fig. 20; pl. XXXII A)

The rock-cut cave-temple of Śrī-Raṅganāthasvāmi in Śiṅgavaram village (near Gingee and Mēlachēri), Gingee Taluk, South Arcot District, is a fairly large excavation on the eastern face of a large boulder perched on the top of the low hill in the village. The base of this cave-temple and the built-up plinth of the later structural additions in front in the form of *maṇḍapas* are approached by a steep flight of steps from the ground.

The preparation of the rock-surface in order to give a vertical face for the excavation of the cave-temple does not appear to have presented much difficulty, since the place selected was almost a vertical scarp. There has been a cutting-in of about 2 ft. at the northern end, while at the southern there has been very little cutting-in, since at this point there is a natural inward curve of the rock-face. On the vertical prepared scarp has been cut a façade of two pillars and two pilasters. The two pillars have as usual the lower and upper parts cubical (*śadurams*) and the intervening part octagonal (*kaṭṭu*). All the four faces of the cubical parts appear to have been adorned by the usual lotus-medallions. Those on the front faces have been covered up by the brick wall of the later structural *maṇḍapa* in front. The two lateral faces also are obscured by the jambs of the doorway inserted in later times and the screen-wall closing up the two outer *aṅkaṇas.* The bold pilasters present in their external aspect the full features and size of pillars and have to be called pilasters only because they are still *in antis* and have not been totally cut off from the parent rock at their extreme sides— a feature not met with in the Mahēndra cave-temples generally, except in the Śīyamaṅgalam cave-temple. This has resulted by the cutting of niches immediately outside and adjoining the pilasters in both the cave-temples as also at Maṇḍagapaṭṭu and Daḷavāṇūr.

The rock-face beyond the two pilasters has been carved into two niches, one in the southern extremity and the other in the northern extremity, each containing a *dvāra-pāla,* two-armed, facing front with the outer hand in *kaṭi* and the inner hand raised in adoration. They wear *kirīṭa-makuṭas, patra-kuṇḍalas* and *yajñōpavītas.* On the southern end beyond the *dvāra-pāla* is cut another large niche with Durgā standing on the head of *Mahisha.*

On the top of each pillar over the upper *śaduram* is mounted a thin square *phalaka* of greater sides, thus projecting on all the four sides, a feature recalling the Mahēndra cave at Daḷavāṇūr, where the *phalaka* is found only over the façade-pillars and not on the pilasters. On this *phalaka* is cut a massive corbel which has an angular profile, the bevelling confined only to the lower half of the height of the corbel, so that it comes in between a vertical face above and a horizontal below, the included angles being obtuse, about 120°. This is unlike any of the Mahēndra corbels in shape and form. There is no *taraṅga*-ornament or median *paṭṭa.* In this respect, it resembles some of the corbels of the

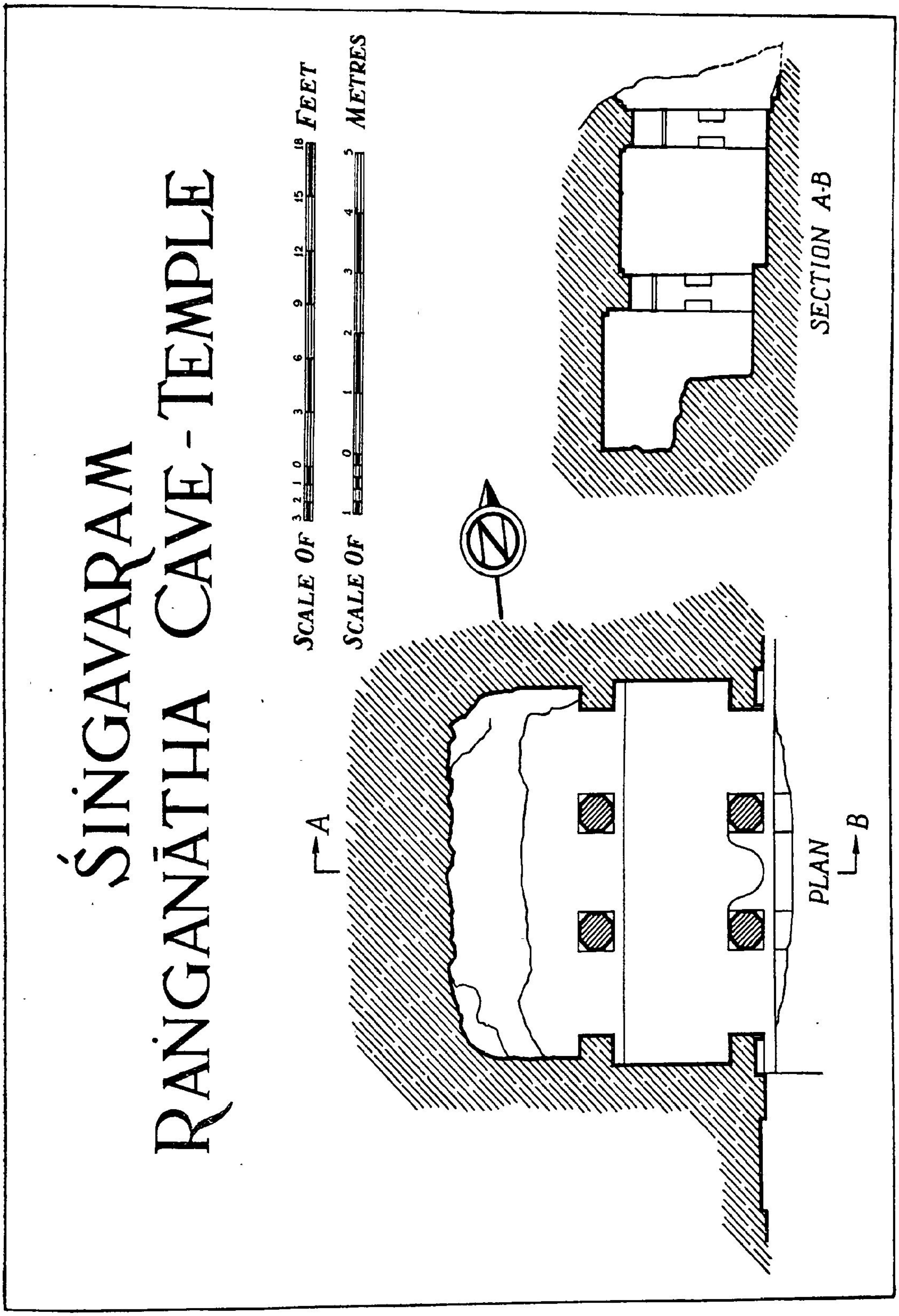
ŚIṄGAVARAM
RAṄGANĀTHA CAVE - TEMPLE
SCALE OF 3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 FEET
SCALE OF 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 METRES
A
B
PLAN
SECTION A-B

FIG. 20

later Pallava, Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍya caves. Nothing of the rough cornice or *kapōta*, if any, can be seen because of the structural *maṇḍapa* in front.

Internally the pilasters merge insensibly into the side walls of the rock-cut *maṇḍapa* behind, and there is thus no differentiation of the *śadurams* and the *kaṭṭus* on the sides where the pilasters meet the respective side walls of the *maṇḍapa* behind, while on the other sides, that face the corresponding pillar of that row, the differentiation into two *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu* is prominently seen. The pilasters too carry on the top the *phalaka* and above it the corbel or *pōtikā* of the same type as on the pillars.

Behind this row of pillars and pilasters is cut another row of two pillars and two pilasters with corbels and beam identical with those of the front row, thus marking the division between the front *mukha-maṇḍapa* and the rear *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The *śadurams* of the pillars are also adorned by the same type of lotus-medallion. Here too on the top of each pillar and pilaster is a *phalaka* carrying the corbel on the top. The pilasters of this row differ from those of the façade, in that they are not differentiated into *śadurams* and *kaṭṭu*. On their outer faces, they have each an oblong niche on the top with a relief of a woman devotee (or *dvāra-pālikā*) as on the top of the façade pilasters of the Śīyamaṅgalam cave-temple, in graceful *tri-bhaṅga*, the outer arms placed in *kaṭi*, the inner holding a *nīlōtpala* and shown as if walking towards the shrine.

On the wall behind this second row of pillars and pilasters is cut the shrine proper, the back wall of which is more or less curved tending more to the shape of a semi-circle than that of an oblong sanctum. The major portion of the natural rock of this sanctum has gone into the carving of the huge sculpture of Anantaśāyi with head to the south. The main figure of Vishṇu extends from end to end of the cave, reclining on the coils of a huge Śēsha with a large hood showing five heads in its spread. The head of Vishṇu is slightly raised than the level of the body; his right arm hangs down, while the left is bent at the elbow with the hand in the *kaṭaka* pose. Rising from the navel of Vishṇu is the lotus-stalk which goes up the hind wall blossoming into a lotus with Brahmā seated on it. Brahmā is four-faced and four-armed, the upper right holding *akshamālā* and the upper left holding a *kalaśa*, the lower right in what appears to be *vyākhyā* and the lower left placed on the crossed legs, palm upwards as if in *dhyāna*. Three of his four faces are visible. Between the head of Ādi-śēsha and the left hand of Vishṇu is a flying dwarfish figure with his left hand stretched out in *sūchi* and the right held up with the palm facing front as if in the attitude of slapping. Beyond Brahmā, towards the legs of Vishṇu at the northern end are three other large figures cut on the back wall. The one immediately to the north of Brahmā is Garuḍa, also in a flying attitude, his left hand in *sūchi* and right in *kaṭi*. The wings behind Garuḍa are shown half-folded, and there is a cobra coiling round his warning left arm. In front of Garuḍa are Madhu and Kaiṭabha both two-armed and with large *jaṭā-makuṭas*, one holding an upright club by his left hand and pointing by his right towards Vishṇu in *sūchi* pose. The other at the extreme has his left hand resting on the club placed across his thighs and his right hand held up with bent elbow, palm facing out, as if counselling patience. Below, carved under the southern half of the coils of Śēsha are four more figures. The one at the south, almost below the navel region of Vishṇu, wears a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*; what he holds in both his hands are not visible because of a structural stone plinth in front. The second figure below the thigh region of Vishṇu has almost an identical face, but the other portions of his figure are also obscured by the same structural plinth. The third figure, similar to the first two, has his right hand raised up in adoration and the left in *kaṭi*. The fourth figure is that of Bhūdevī, supplicating at the feet of Vishṇu. On the south wall, as if facing the whole scene and behind Bhūdēvī, is cut a fifth figure with an elaborate *jaṭā-makuṭa* and a *pāśa* in his right hand. What he holds in his left hand,

which appears to be placed on his belly, is not clear. This figure cannot be Śiva, since he has only two arms and the crescent moon is not visible on the *jaṭā-makuṭa*. The local identification is that he is Nārada. The sculpture has been much redone in later times, thus altering original features.

The association of the niche of Durgā on the rock-face immediately to the north of the cave-temple with a Vishṇu shrine recalls similar associations of these two forms in the Mahishamardinī cave, where they are Anantaśāyi and Mahisāsuramardinī, in the Varāha-maṇḍapa, it is Durgā adjoining Trivikrama, in the Ādivarāha cave-temple again it is Durgā near the Bhūvarāha shrine, and in the Trimūrti cave, where the niche of Durgā adjoins the Vishṇu shrine.

The Durgā niche is approached through a small structural cell on the hind wall of the Dēvī shrine, which is a structural addition in front of the rock-face. This niche is about 5 ft. square, cut between two pilasters with a lintel on the top. Durgā (pl. XXXII A) is standing in graceful *tri-bhaṅga*, her left leg planted straight on the ground, her right slightly raised and bent, the foot trampling on a buffalo-head. She is four-armed: the upper right holds a *prayōga-chakra* and the upper left a *śaṅkha*, the lower right rests on the thigh over her girdle and the lower left is placed on the upraised hip in *kaṭi*. She wears enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas* and a *jaṭā-makuṭa*. This is one of the finest forms of Durgā and this fine *tri-bhaṅga* form is in striking contrast to the other well-known sculptures of standing Durgā—in the niche adjoining the Trimūrti cave-temple (p. 160), in the Varāha-maṇḍapam (p. 148), in the Ādivarāha cave-temple (p. 171) and in the Draupadī-ratha, all at Mahābalipuram. Except in the Ādivarāha cave-temple, Durgā stands in all the other cases in *sama-bhaṅga* over a buffalo-head or a *padmapīṭha*. On either side are two kneeling figures, the one on the north piercing his left palm by a dagger held in his right hand. Here, as in the Ādivarāha example, it is not so drastic an offering but amounts only to blood-letting (a symbolic sacrifice). Similar figures in the Varāha-maṇḍapa and in the Draupadī-ratha offer their heads. The devotee here wears *patra-kuṇḍalas* and a *jaṭā-bhāra*. The person on the south wearing a *yajñōpavīta* and a *jaṭā-bhāra* has his left arm in *kaṭi* and the right in *kaṭaka*, as if holding a flower to Durgā. Durgā wears *pāda-saras* and *kiṅkiṇīs* round her anklet, tassels and a *mēkhalā* round her hip, a series of *valayas* extending from the wrist to the elbow in all the hands, ornamented *kēyūras* on all the arms above the elbow, a *kucha-bandha* round the breasts and three series of *hāras*. The face as also the look of the eye are graceful and downcast.

Dubreuil[1] ascribes this cave-temple to Mahēndra on the basis of the similarity of the *dvāra-pālas* with those of Mahēndra temples. He again states that since Śiṅgavaram or Siṁhapura, which was the capital of Siṁhapuranāḍu of the inscriptions, must have been founded by Siṁhavishṇu, taking the name into consideration, the cave-temple can be ascribed to Siṁhavishṇu, the predecessor of Mahēndravarman. But if Mahēndravarman was the initiator of the rock-cut cave-temple, as he himelf states in his Maṇḍagappaṭṭu inscription, there could not have been any cave-temples excavated by his father Siṁha-vishṇu. Probably, the place was named after Narasiṁhavarman Māmalla, who was also called Siṁhavishṇu. The incorporation in this temple of some features found in the later cave-temples of Mahēndra and the association of Anantaśāyi and Durgā, as in the many examples at Mahābalipuram, would ascribe this to the period after Mahēndra and rather late in the time of Narasiṁhavarman Māmalla or even in the time of Paramēśvaravarman, who completed the Ādi-Varāha cave-temple, containing a similar Durgā, at Mahā-balipuram.

[1] *Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I, pp. 49-51.

Mēlachēri: Śikhari-Pallavēśvaram cave-temple (fig. 21; pl. XXXII B)

The rock-cut cave temple called Śikhari-Pallavēśvaram at Mēlachēri (near Gingee), Gingee Taluk, South Arcot District, dedicated to Śiva, is an excavation of the simpler type; it consists only of a cell with a *maṇḍapa* in front. The western scarp of the low rock facing the pond has been cut back from near its bottom to a depth of about 4 ft. at the base and 1½ ft. at the top in order to get a perpendicular scarp for the actual excavation. The overhanging bit though fairly regular, has not been completed into a well-formed *kapōta.*

The façade of the excavation consists of two massive square pillars and two pilasters —one at either end. All of them are undifferentiated into *śadurams* and *kaṭṭus,* but are uniformly four-sided throughout, a feature not common in the Mahēndra-type temples. The massive corbel (*pōtikā*) is of the bevelled type and has an angular profile without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation and median *paṭṭa.* The beam on top of the corbel is of about the same width as the corbel. All the pillars have been completely finished with a square section, and it is on the western face of the southern pillar that the Pallava-Grantha inscription of Chandrāditya is found.[1]

Over the beam is cut a thinner but wider *vājana* projecting in front and behind. Behind the façade is cut an oblong *maṇḍapa* with plain walls on all the three sides. The ceiling shows, however, the projecting *vājana* over the hind face of the beam of the façade, extending all round continuously below the ceiling and over the walls.

Cut on the hind wall of this *maṇḍapa,* centrally, is a plain oblong opening leading into the cubical cell, in excavating which a large portion of the central mass of rock has been retained and finished into a cylindrical *liṅga* with an octagonal *āvuḍaiyār* below (pl. XXXII B). This is the only example of a rock-cut cave-temple in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalaṁ where the *liṅga* and the *āvuḍaiyār* are cut out of the same rock as the cave-temple—a feature which is not found in Mahēndravarman caves nor even in the caves of the periods of Māmalla and Rājasiṁha. Carved on the ceiling over the *liṅga* is a lotus.

On the north wall of the *maṇḍapa* has been cut an arched niche and in it a standing figure of Pārvatī. The style of sculpture indicates definitely a much later date than the cave-temple. A low bas-relief of Gaṇēśa, also later, has been cut on the extension of the rock-wall on the southern side in front of the façade of the cave. The northern *aṅkaṇa* of the façade has been walled up and plastered.

The inscription, in Sanskrit verse of four lines, reads—

1 *Kāritam-idan-nṛipatinā*

2 *Chandrādityēna sarvva[nāthē]na* [ı*]

3 *Śrī-Śikhari-Pallavēśvaram-iti*

4 *Śaivan-dhā[ma] Siṁhapurē* [ıı*]

'This home of Śiva named Śrī-Śikhari-Pallavēśvaram, was caused to be made at Siṁhapura (Siṅgavaram) by king Chandrāditya who was a *sarvanātha*'.

The cave-temple is termed *dhāma*[2] and the title *Śikhari* which is indicated to be a Pallava name, is unknown among the names of the Pallava dynasty. The name Chandrāditya, too, is not among the known Pallava names, but the appellation 'Āditya'

[1] Text in *South Indian Inscriptions,* XII, no. 115; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy,* 1916, no. 234, and pt. II para 6; Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities,* I, p. 66.

[2] The term '*dhāma*' for a rock-cut cave temple occurs in only one other known inscription in south India from Tirupparaṅkuṉṟam (*Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy,* 1951-52, no. 143.)

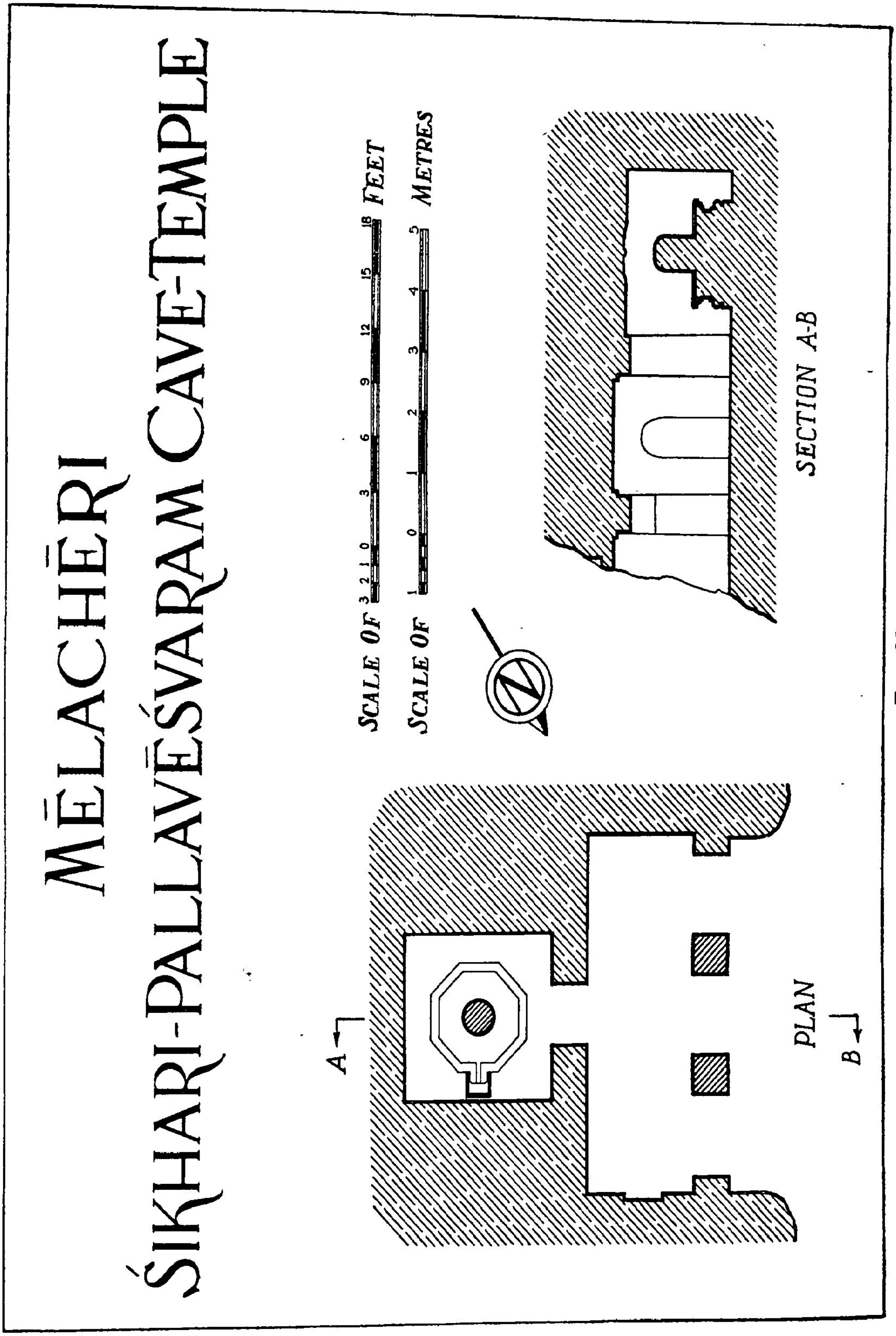
MĒLACHĒRI
ŚIKHARI-PALLAVĒŚVARAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 21

is common to the Chāḷukyan names. There was a Chandrāditya, son of Pulakēśin II, known from two records of his queen Vijayamahādēvī[1], who was a contemporary of Māmalla. If he was the same as the excavator of the Melachēri cave, his presence in the Pallava country and his relationship with the Pallavas have yet to be explained. It is not possible to account for the excavation of this cave-temple by a Chāḷukya ruler in the Pallava territory unless we suppose that he was an ally sojourning in the area or was matrimonially connected. The appellation '*pōtti*' (feminine of the Tamil *Pōttan*-Pallava) referring to Vijayamahādēvī in the Gochre plates[2] seems to indirectly point to the fact that the queen belonged to the Pallava family. Palaeographically too, Dubreuil (the first to discover the cave-temple and its inscription) states that the script of the inscription is of about the time of Māmalla. Chandrāditya, the excavator of the temple has not been identified with any amount of certainty. He names this temple *Śikhari-Pallavēśvara* in the same inscription after a Pallava name *Śikhari*, and calls the place Simhapura. As mentioned in connexion with the Śiṅgavaram cave-temple Simhapura may be a name derived from the other name of Māmalla, which was Narasimha or Simhavishṇu. The absence of any clear *biruda* of Mahēndravarman and the uncertainty of the identification of Chandrāditya with Mahēndravarman, the extreme simplicity of the cave-temple and the presence of the rock-cut *liṅga* with *āvuḍaiyār*, would all tend to show that this cave-temple is later than the time of Mahēndra, perhaps of the time of Māmalla, if not even later, as the Śiṅgavaram cave-temple. The proximity of the two cave-temples and the similarity between the corbels of both would perhaps indicate more or less proximity in date of excavation. But though this cave-temple is aberrant and has nothing characteristically Pallava in it and was not excavated by a Pallava king, it has to be considered here, only because of its location among other Pallava cave-temples in the Pallava country.

Māmaṇḍūr IV: smaller unfinished cave-temple (pl. XXXIII A)

The southernmost cave-temple in the Māmaṇḍūr series, which is towards the northern end of the southern hill in Narasapāḷaiyam village, Cheyyār Taluk, North Arcot District, is an unfinished excavation (pl. XXXIII A). Obviously, the excavation could not have been completed because of the natural fault striking from the top of the southern side downward towards the north passing through the line of the front pillars which prevented the completion of the pillars to the required thickness. The actual excavation of the façade is recessed to an average depth of 3 ft. on the almost vertical scarp of a boulder on the top of this hill. It looks as if the vertical scarp was reached by paring off the front portions along the natural vertical cleavage lines of the rock. The façade consists of two pillars and two pilasters with an oblong *maṇḍapa* behind. The idea was to excavate three shrine-cells behind as would be indicated by the blocking out of the hind wall into cubes by chisel lines and provision of chunks of the natural rock below for the cutting of the *sōpānas*. In front on the top of the corbels, provision is also made for the *vājana* and rough *kapōta*, all uncut. The two pillars have broken off at their top portions along the lines of the natural fault. Thus, all these features look like an early attempt at excavation, perhaps in the time of Māmalla, which was abandoned because of the faults and consequent impossibilities in completing the work.

Māmaṇḍūr III: larger unfinished cave-temple (fig. 22; pl. XXXIII B)

The third cave from the north in the Māmaṇḍūr series which, unlike the first two, is excavated towards the southern end of a taller rock to the south of the first two, is also

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, VII, pp. 163-64.
[2] *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 44-47.

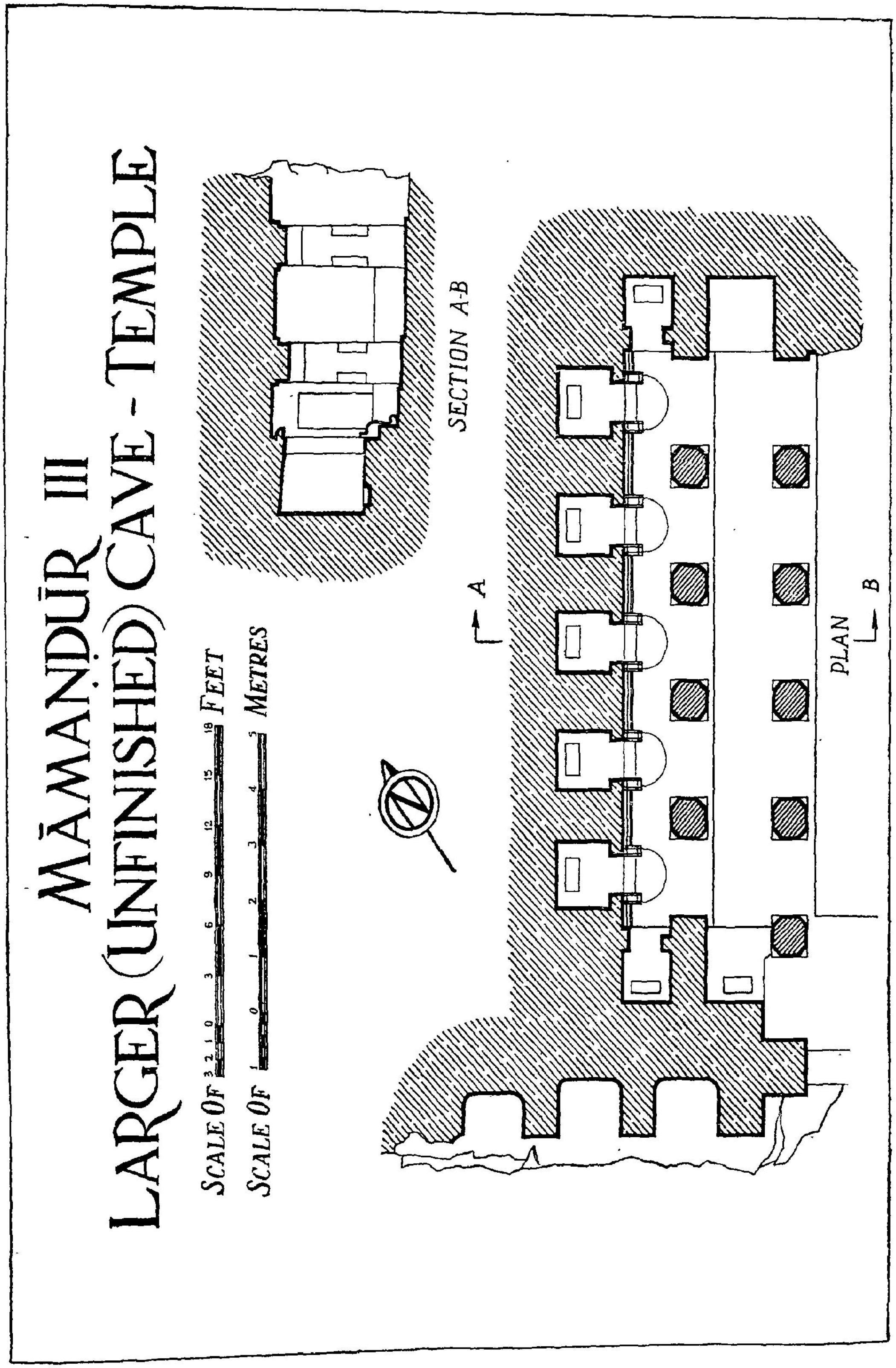
MĀMANDŪR III
LARGER (UNFINISHED) CAVE - TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
A
B
PLAN

FIG. 22

located in Narasapāḷaiyam village, Cheyyār Taluk, North Arcot District. On top of the hillock is the structural temple of Tirumānandīśvara of Māvaṇḍūrnāḍu.[1] The original plan here seems to have been bolder and more ambitious, viz. to cut a pillared circum-ambulatory round a line of five shrines.

This excavation (pl. XXXIII B) would belong to the category of a pillared *maṇḍapa* surrounding one or more shrines similar to the Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple, immediately to the south of Arjuna's Penance at Mahābalipuram of the Māmalla style, where, though the excavation is unfinished, it will be clear that the intention was to cut a *maṇḍapa* into the very massive rock running all round the central shrine, the completed portion of the excavation extending on either side of the central shrine to nearly the hind portion of the *maṇḍapa*. For this purpose, at Māmaṇḍur, the most convenient corner of the rock of the requisite height and massiveness was chosen, where the rock itself originally had an almost vertical scarp owing to the vertical cleavage of massive sheets in front of it. After eliminating these detached sheets by cutting through, the vertical scarp of the main boulder was reached on the eastern side, while on the southern side there was an almost natural vertical scarp which required only trimming of the irregular external surface in order to get a perpendicular face.

The eastern side is, therefore, recessed to a depth of 3 ft. uniformly at the northern end to make the scarp even and in a line with the south-east corner of the boulder. The façade on this side is provided with seven pillars, the extreme one on the south cut round in rough with a mass for its corbel on top including some rock for the projecting bracket in front. The one to the north of this has been shaped out from the base to the top with the corbel cut and also fairly finished on top. The four pillars further to the north of this show a greater degree of completion, in that the lower and upper *śadurams* and the intervening *kaṭṭus* have been cut almost to the finish. The northernmost pilaster, in contact with the large mass of main rock, still retains the shape of a pilaster with its corbel complete on top, the lower and upper *śadurams* not being demarcated. Inside this front row on the eastern side is a second row of four pillars, corresponding to the four main pillars in front, with *śadurams* on top and bottom and *kaṭṭus* in between, and at either extreme the two outer columns are more of the shape of pilasters than pillars. Thus, the *maṇḍapa* is divided into two parts, an outer and an inner. At the southern end of the outer verandah the rock has been cut into between the two pilasters and also towards the outside as if to take this pillared cloister round to the southern side.

On the south, the rock face has been cut into with a façade of four pillars with roughly blocked-out square sections and roughly shaped corbels on top, the spaces in between them deeply excavated as if to reach into the *maṇḍapa* on the eastern side. The continuation of this southern façade towards the west has been interrupted by series of faults in the parent rock, so much so that it appears that the cloister could go only half way round the row of five central shrines. This perhaps called for an alteration of the original design and the two extreme columns of the eastern façade were decided to be finished as pilasters while abandoning further excavation on the southern side. Consequently, the attempt at excavating on the northern end of the main pillared verandah was also stopped and the excavation converted into a rough shrine.

The corresponding excavation on the southern side has a *chandra-śilā* placed in front of it at the floor of the outer verandah, thus converting it into a shrine though its outer or eastern wall has been broken. The outer verandah, therefore, has come to have two

[1] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1923, no. 420, and also 1906, no. 260.

roughly carved niches, one at each end. Similar excavations, which are more definitely shrines, have been completed at either end of the inner verandah with pilasters for their jambs, though no provision for the *sōpānas* has been made.

The corbels on top of the pillars wherever complete show the definite curved profile, though without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation. The width of the *śadurams* is 2 ft. 3 in. both above and below, the height of the lower *śaduram* being greater by 3 in. allowing for a plinth, the height of the *kaṭṭu* is equal to the height of the *śaduram* in the case of the external pillars. The internal pillars are more or less of the same dimensions; but the lower *śadurams* are only 2 ft. 3 in. high, i.e., they are as high as they are wide, the decrease in height being taken up by the raised floor of the inner verandah. The top *śadurams* are almost equal to those at the bottom, while the intervening *kaṭṭu* is shorter being 2 ft. only. The corbels retain the same proportions as in the other cave-temples described before. On top of the corbel runs a beam, and over it the *vājana* is marked off externally as a thick vertical course projecting beyond the beam. Though the underside of the *kapōta* has been rendered even, externally it has not been cut out of the crude rock in the form of a curved cornice.

On the back wall behind the inner verandah are a row of five shrines cut with floors at a higher level than that of the *maṇḍapa* in front. Along the base of the hind wall of the inner verandah and reaching up to the height of the floor of these shrines is projected an *adhishṭhāna* with *upāna*, *jagatī*, *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha* and *paṭṭikā* mouldings extending from end to end, but not turning round below the lateral shrines either of the simulated *ardha-maṇḍapa* or *mukha-maṇḍapa*. This *adhishṭhāna* is interrupted by five *sōpānas* cut in front of the five shrine entrances, each *sōpāna* of three steps, the lowermost being a *chandra-śilā*, the two upper steps being guarded by side rails curved like the proboscis of an elephant. Though the *kaṇṭha* moulding shows the reliefs for the pillar bases which in addition to flanking shrine entrances should also come between them and canton the two extreme corners making in all sixteeen, the corresponding pilasters have not been cut out on the wall above. Thus, the wall strips between the shrine-entrances are quite plain. In spite of this, there is a beam-line running on top forming the lintels over the doorways and extending between them in the form of a thin beam. Over this is projected a *kapōta* with a curved outward surface and an even bottom, which alone is extended over the two lateral shrines of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and again over the two lateral shrines of the front *maṇḍapa*. All these would show that the idea of cutting a pillared cloister all round the central row of five shrines was abandoned even at the early stage as soon as the fault at the western end of the southern continuation was met with and it was subsequently decided to improvise the lateral excavations into four more shrines, though they were not provided with *sōpānas*, *adhishṭhānas*, pilasters or beams.

Each of the five principal shrines or the cells is almost cubical, its interior rough-cut showing traces of plaster, perhaps put on later in order to even out the rough surfaces. On the floor of these shrines as well as of the four lateral shrines are cut oblong sockets extending straight from almost end to end and placed very near the hind wall of the cells, evidently for the insertion of bas-reliefs on stone slabs at a later stage. This supposition would gain force from the fact that the local rock exfoliates in the form of vertical slabs and would offer the material for bas-reliefs. In the absence of the *dvāra-pālas* or other indications, it is very difficult to guess the deities that were intended to be installed in these shrines. Over the beams, the ceilings of the two *maṇḍapas* show the projection of the plank on top of the beam on either side extending as a definite *vājana*-moulding. Even the ceiling is uneven.

Significantly, no inscriptions have been found in this cave-temple and it is doubtful

whether this was intended to be worshipped by the designers, though, with later improvisation, subsequent installations might have been made. This would be proved by a series of ten mortise-holes cut, curiously enough, above the corbels of the façade and below the *kapōta* for the accommodation of joists which supported a terrace of a structural addition in front. This large and more ambitious excavation would perhaps belong to the second period, i.e., about the time of Māmalla.

Mahābalipuram: Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam or Atyantakāma's cave-temple (fig. 23; pls. XXXIV A and XXXV)

This is a rock-excavation (pl. XXXIV A) facing east practically almost on the southern end of the Mahābalipuram hill (Chingleput Taluk and District) below the lighthouse and the Mahishamardinī cave. The cave cut at the top of the rock here is reached by ascending a small gradient. The excavation proper is raised about 2 ft. from the immediately adjoining ground-level in front. Since the outer contour of the rock-length chosen had greater bulge across its median line, gradually turning in towards the south, the scarp excavation of the cave is recessed about 4 ft. from the rock-surface on the northern side and about 1 ft. on the south, the top-line of the cutting being about 5 ft. below the crest-line of the rock, and, as such, not forming a very heavy roof.

On the façade is cut a row of two pillars and two pilasters, the extreme pilasters *in antis* tetragonal throughout in section, while the central pillars have the characteristic shape with *śadurams* above and below and *kaṭṭu* in between. The *śadurams* are plain and not adorned by lotus-medallions. The corbels on top of the pillars and pilasters alike are massive with their ends sharply bevelled to an angle of 45° and their profiles quite angular. The length of the corbels is double the width of the pillars which at the *śaduram* is 1 ft. 11 in. Over the corbels is mounted imperceptibly the *uttira*, there being no sharp demarcation between the *pōtikās* and the *uttira*. Over the *uttira* runs the *vājana*, a second member much thinner than the beam, but wider, thereby giving a clear offset appearance all round below the ceiling. The four pillars and pilasters form the front-line of the *mukha-maṇḍapa*. Immediately behind is an identical set of pillars and pilasters forming the front-line of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, the floor of which is raised by about 3 in. above the floor of the *mukha-maṇḍapa*. The lateral walls of both the *ardha-* and *mukha-maṇḍapas* are plain and without any sculpture. In the narrow overhang over the façade of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* there is an attempt to shape it into the form of a curved *kapōta* without any superficial ornamentation.

On the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* are excavated three shrines (pl. XXXV) in a row with a common *adhishṭhāna* and three separate *sōpānas*, each with three steps and a *chandra-śilā* below. While the *sōpānas* of the two lateral shrines have no parapets, that of the central shrine is flanked by two *śuruḷyāḷi* parapets. The mouth of the *makara* or *vyāla* from which the curved proboscis issues is only a conventional representation. The central shrine is cut out as projecting well into the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, while the two lateral shrines conform to the plane of the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The *adhishṭhāna*, of the same height as the *śadurams* of the pillars in front, curiously enough, has only the four important members, viz., the *upāna*, *jagatī* and the *tripaṭṭa-kumuda* with the *kampa* serving as the *prati* on top. The *kaṇṭha*, the upper *kampa* and the *paṭṭikā* over it are absent. The wall directly rises over the top of the *prati*-like *kampa* over the *kumuda*.

The wall of the central shrine has two pairs of pilasters or *kuḍya-stambhas*, one pair on either side of the shrine-entrance, and one each of the other pair cantoning the respective corners. The pilasters are tetragonal throughout and like the two rows of larger pillars and pilasters in front carry the *pōtikās* directly on their tops; the top portion of the shaft not

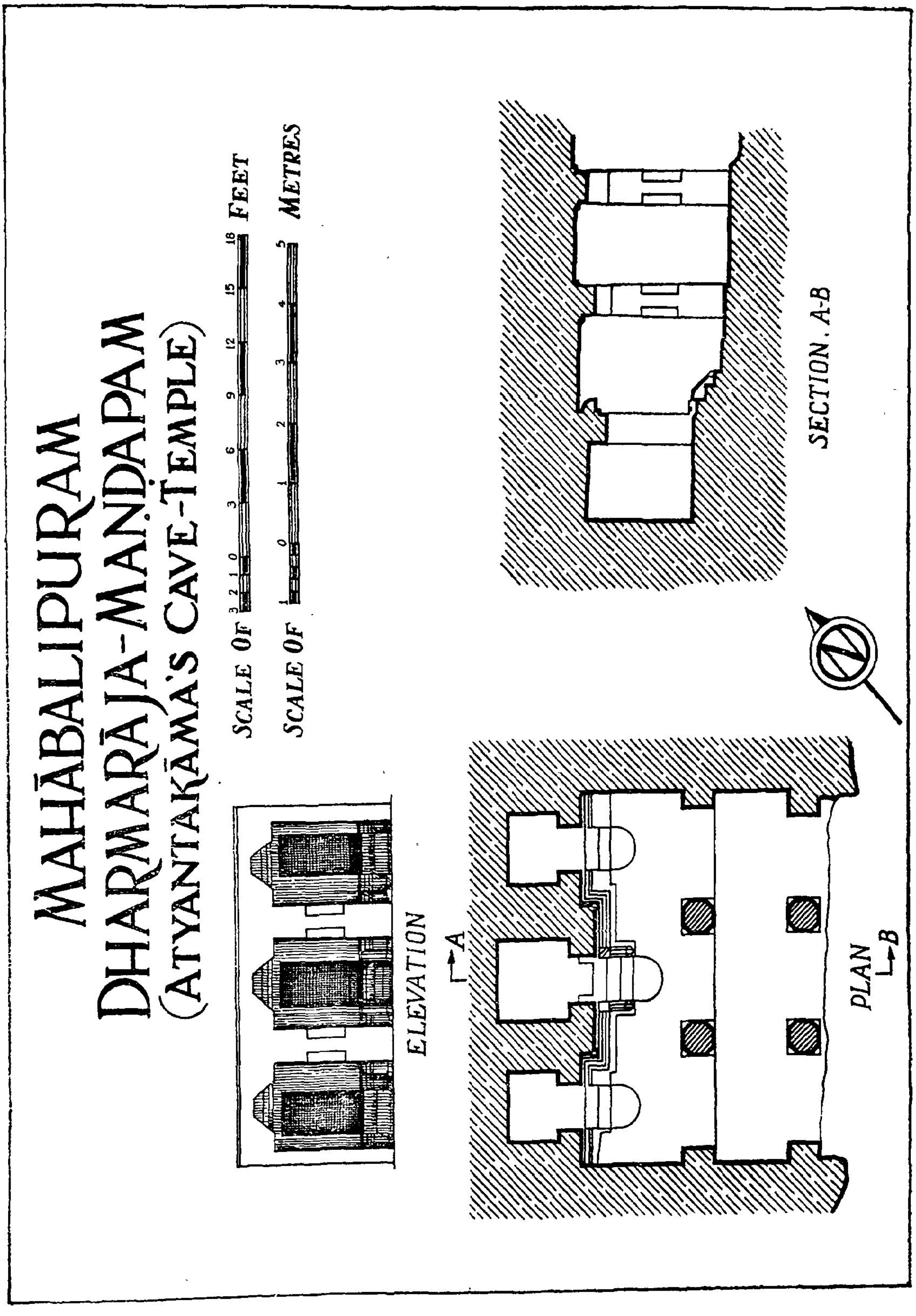
MAHĀBALIPURAM
DHARMARĀJA-MAṆḌAPAM
(ATYANTAKĀMA'S CAVE-TEMPLE)
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
ELEVATION
SECTION. A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 23

carrying the usual architectural members like *padma-bandha, kalaśa, tāḍi, kumbha, padma* (*pāli*) and *phalaka*. The *pōtikās* are similar in shape and design to those over the larger pillars. They are of the simple bevelled type with an angular profile with the beam imperceptibly merging with them on top. Over the beam runs again a thin *valabhī*, above which is cut out the curved and projected *kapōta*. This *valabhī* and *kapōta* turn round the corners and continue over the two lateral shrines which, however, are devoid of pilasters. Between the pairs of pilasters on either side of the central doorway the wall space is cut into two shallow oblong niches accommodating bas-reliefs of *dvāra-pālas*, which have been chiselled off by the Vaishṇava occupants at a later period. But from what is left of them, one can say that they were two-armed, facing front with their outer arms in *kaṭi* and their inner arms folded in, what they held not being clear. Both of them appear to have worn the *yajñōpavīta* in the *nivīta*-fashion. The *kapōta* on top over the central shrine has two *kūḍu* arches which are slightly greater than semi-circles with plain centres and shovel-like flat finials on top, placed more or less over the centre of the *dvāra-pāla* niches. The excavation of the two side shrines naturally reduced the dimensions of the cell of the central shrine. All the three cells are empty and there are no traces of bas-reliefs on the back walls of the shrines.

The cave-temple contains an inscription which gives the clue to its dating and authorship. The inscription[1] is in Pallava-Grantha script and the language is Sanskrit. It runs to fourteen lines, contains eleven verses and gives also the name of the temple as *Atyantakāma-Pallavēśvara-gṛiham*—the Īśvara temple of Atyantakāma-Pallava—a title of Paramēśvaravarman I. It also mentions the other titles of Paramēśvara—*Śrīnidhi, Śrībhara Raṇajaya, Taruṇāṅkura* and *Kāmarāja*. From the *ślēsha* (*double entendre*) used in the epithets *Chitramāya, Guṇabhājana, Svastha, Niruttara* and *Paramēśvara*, which are applicable both to Śiva and the king, Hultzsch has rightly concluded that the actual name of the king was Paramēśvara and that he was identical with Paramēśvaravarman I. The temple is denoted by the terms *īśvara-gṛiha, vēśma* and *mandira-gṛiha*. The verses are in praise of Śiva and among them the following clearly state that Atyantakāma excavated this cave temple.

5 ....*Atyanta-*
6 *kāmō nṛipatir=nnirjjit-ārāti-maṇḍalaḥ* [1*]
khyātō Raṇajayaḥ Śambhōs=tēn-ēdaṁ vēśma
7 *kāritaṁ* ॥ [5*]
and
11 ....*Tēn=ēdaṁ kāritan=tuṅgan=Dhūrjjaṭēr=mmandira-*
12 *gṛiham* [1*] *prajānām=ishṭa-siddhy=arttham*
Śāṅkarīṁ bhūtim=ichchatā ॥ [10*] *ōṁ* ॥
Atyantakāma-Pallavēśvara-gṛiham ॥

This is followed by the imprecatory verse, cursing six times 'those in whose hearts does not dwell Rudra, the deliverer from the walking on the evil path.'

In spite of this there has been speculation about the authorship and attribution of this cave-temple, and it has been variously assigned to Mahēndra because of its type and to Māmalla because of its location at Mahābalipuram,[2] which place is supposed by many,

[1] Text published in *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 19, also XII, no. 21 and *Epigraphia Indica*, X, pp. 10-11.

[2] Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. II, pp. 10-12 would ascribe this to Māmalla; see also Sivarama-murti, *Mahābalipuram*, (Department of Archaeology, India, 1952), p. 23.

following Dubreuil[1], to have come into prominence in the time of Māmalla, though it has been an important port-town from earlier times, but all the monuments there date from Māmalla's time and after. The same verse inscription with the same name Atyanatakāma Pallavēśvara-gṛiham, in the same script is found on the Gaṇēśa-ratha, the most complete and better-finished example when compared with the 'Five rathas', attributed to Māmalla, and the same imprecatory verse is found in the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapa, a cave-temple of the Māmalla style.[2] Thus, Paramēśvara seems to have made all the three types that his illustrious predecessors Mahēndra and Māmalla had initiated and that had come into vogue, viz., a Mahēndra type cave-temple (Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam), a Māmalla type cave-temple (Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam) and a *ratha* or monolithic *vimāna* (Gaṇēśa-ratha). He himself seems to have initiated a new method of constructing structural temples with cut-stone slabs as in the Śiva temple at Kūram.

Besides the above, the comparatively slender and tall pillars and the sharp-cut corbels would differentiate it from a Mahēndravarman cave-temple. Though Atyantakāma (as also a few more *birudas* of Paramēśvara) was a title borne by Rājasiṁha, Paramēśvara's successor, for obvious reasons, this cave-temple cannot be assigned to him, and in his own cave-temple at Śāḷuvaṅkuppam, nearby, Rājasiṁha has purposely chosen one of his other surnames, Atiraṇachaṇḍa, as he has done for his structural temples at Kāñchī and Panamalai. It also cannot be an excavation started by Mahēndra and completed by Atyantakāma between whom two kings had reigned, for such a simple cave-temple would not have waited for so long to be completed. Or even assuming for a moment that it was excavated by Mahēndra or Māmalla, it would not have waited for its consecration till the time of Paramēśvara. Judging from the absence of the sculpture of the principal deity in the central sanctum, this is to be taken as the earliest of Paramēśvara (as also the Gaṇēśa-ratha), while in the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapa, Paramēśvara had cut a bas-relief of Sōmāskanda, now chipped off, indicating it to be later.

The temple was perhaps originally intended for the Trimūrtis, though the appellation *Īśvara-gṛihaṁ* would denote that the primary deity consecrated in the central shrine was Śiva in one of his forms and not a *liṅga*. This fact, common to all the cave-temples of the Pallavas earlier to Rājasiṁha is confirmed in the case of this cave-temple. While in other cases, the presence of a socket or pit of some sort is often found making one doubt whether they could be original or later, this cave-temple had no socket or pit at the centre of the shrine-floor and continued in that condition till the advent of the Vaishṇavas, who occupied it between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. This would show that no *liṅga* was planted there and if at all there was a subsequent installation of the *liṅga* prior to the Vaishṇava advent, it was placed with its *āvuḍaiyār* over the floor (and not with the base of the *liṅga* inserted into a floor-socket) which could have been removed by them. The Vaishṇava occupation of this cave-temple is indicated as in the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam and elsewhere at Mahābalipuram, by the engraving of the symbols of the *chakra* and *śaṅkha* on the façade.

Śāḷuvaṅkuppam: Atiraṇachaṇḍa's cave-temple (fig. 24; pls. XXXIV B and XXXVI)

This cave-temple called *Atiraṇachaṇḍa-Pallavēśvara-gṛiham*, is cut on the sloping eastern face of a solitary low rock in the present hamlet of Śāḷuvaṅkuppam near to and north of Mahābalipuram (Chingleput Taluk and District). In order to get a vertical scarp for

[1] Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I, p. 64.

[2] Dubreuil, also ascribes all these inscriptions to Paramēśvaravarman (*Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I, p. 62).

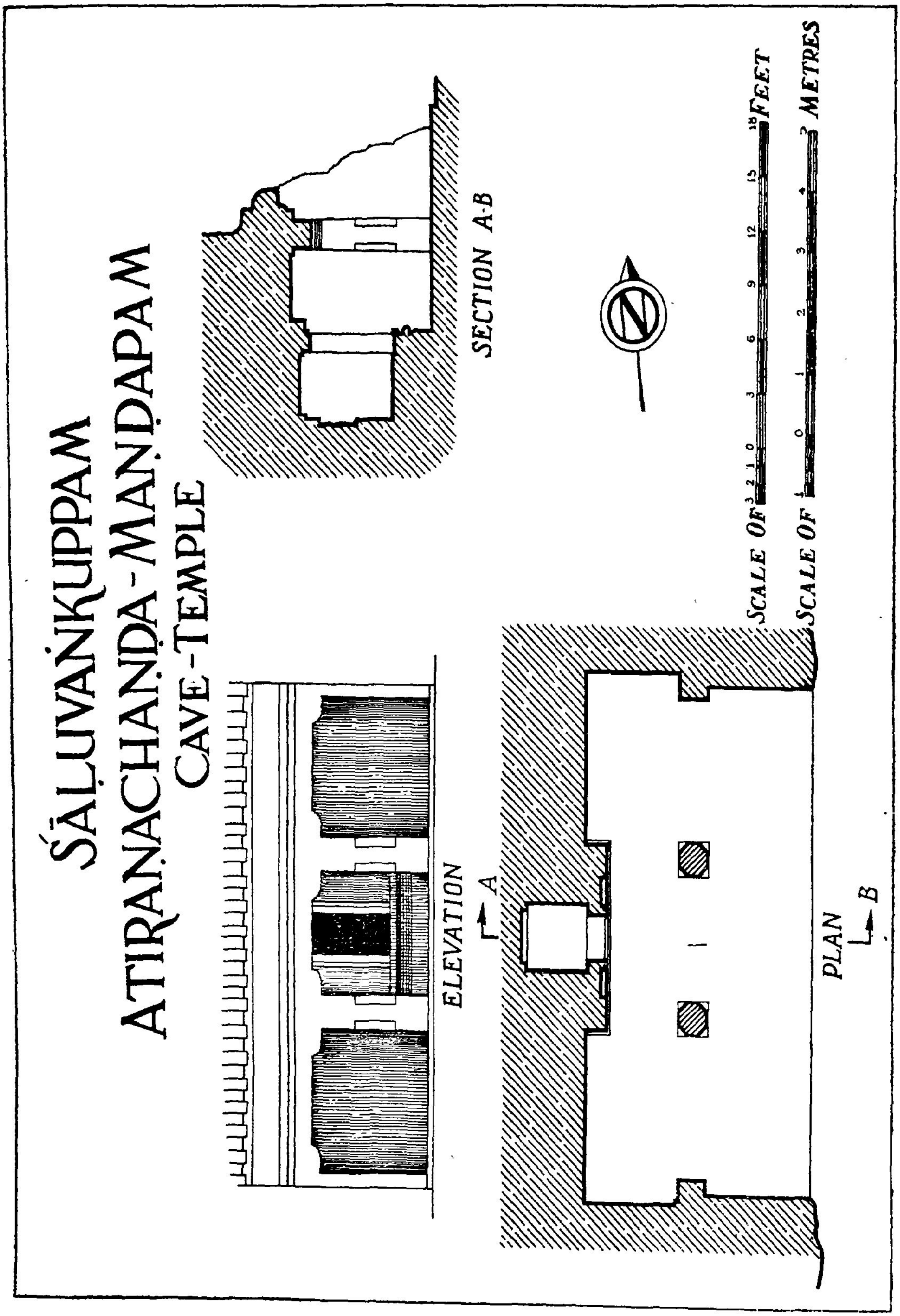
ŚĀLUVAṄKUPPAM
ATIRAṆACHAṆḌA-MAṆḌAPAM
CAVE-TEMPLE
SECTION A-B
ELEVATION
PLAN
A
B
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES

FIG. 24

the excavation, the sloping rock-face was cut into to a depth of about 6 ft. at the bottom, so that a perpendicular face reaching almost to the top-line of the rock could be obtained, the top-line itself being retained for the carving out of the cornice of the façade. At this depth from the general surface of the rock, the prepared surface was cut into in the form of a cave-temple (pl. XXXIV B), consisting of a long oblong *ardha-maṇḍapa* with a square shrine and cell at its back, the frontage of the square shrine projecting into the *maṇḍapa* about 1½ ft. from the general level of the rear wall. On the façade of the *maṇḍapa* are cut two pillars and two pilasters *in antis*; the pilasters at either extreme are tetragonal throughout, but the pillars have square plain *śadurams* at base and top with an octagonal *kaṭṭu* in between. They are not also exactly cubes, their section being more an oblong than a square. For example, the front side of the top *śaduram* is 1 ft. 11 in. long, whereas in width it measures only 1 ft. 6 in. and in height 2 ft. There is also a faintly carved and wider pedestal below the basal *śaduram* about 8 in. high.

On top, the pillars and pilasters carry massive corbels with curved profile and with bold *taraṅga*-ornamentation consisting of a series of roll-mouldings, the projection of the corbel arms on either side of the pillar top being equal to the length of the top *śaduram* of the pillar. Above the corbel runs a plain *uttira* of the same width as the corbel and over it a planking course of greater width and thinner section, which shows externally as a *vājana*-course and is internally incomplete and undifferentiated from the ceiling-surface of the *maṇḍapa*, particularly over the northern and southern bays. Over this *vājana*-course is a small projecting moulding (*valabhī*), which leads on straight to the under-surface of the *kapōta*. This undersurface is even and is not scooped into in accordance with the external curvature of the cornice. Externally, the *kapōta* is shown as quite flexed with a brim along the lower edge marked off by a chisel-line and constriction. Over the *kapōta*, externally, the rock has been cut back again with a series of oblong projections spaced regularly, indicating the ends of about twentytwo terrace joists and at intervals are cut a later series of deep mortise-holes for insertion of joists of a structural front *maṇḍapa* which was perhaps a later addition and which is now totally absent.

On the lateral surface of the excavated portion of the rock, on either side of the end pilasters, are two inscriptions of identical content but in different scripts, the one on the north being in Nāgari and the other on the south, incomplete, in Pallava-Grantha. Again over the façade are two Pallava-Grantha labels, which give the name of *Atiraṇachaṇḍa-Pallavēśvara-gṛiham* to this cave-temple.

The ceiling inside the *maṇḍapa* was not quite finished. As stated before, the *vājana* over the beam has been worked out over the length of the beam spanning the space between the two pillars but left unfinished over the two flanking bays. At the northern end of the northern bay cubical chunks of rock are still there to show that the ceiling over the lateral parts was yet to be finished. A similar state of affairs is found at the southern end also.

The shrine behind the *maṇḍapa* is also not quite complete; but that it was carved out on the model of a square *vimāna* can be judged from its frontage projecting into the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. At the base are cut out the mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna* with a *jagatī*, *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, *paṭṭikā* and a *prati*, this demarcation of the mouldings being completed only along the front side but left incomplete over the inturning corners.[2] The front wall of the shrine is relieved by four pilasters or *kuḍya-stambhas* enclosing two niches, which, in turn, flank

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, no. 23, p. 2.

[2] Unfortunately the floor of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* has been filled up by random or carved stones of a nearby ruined structural temple raising it to the level of the sill of the shrine, thereby obscuring the mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna*. This could be seen only after removing a few of the stones.

the central opening of the cell. The pilasters are tetragonal throughout and undifferentiated into shaft and capital; neither the capital components and corbels nor even the beam being indicated. The two central pilasters thus directly form the jambs of the doorway, while on top is shown a lintel-plate in the form of a *vājana*-like *uttira*, which extends over the two adjoining niches also. Over this is carved a slightly projected curved moulding (*valabhī*) projecting in front, beyond which overhangs the lower surface of the *kapōta*. The *kapōta* is not scooped on its underside, and its curved external surface is left undone, the whole mass in its unfinished stage looking like a massive beam. Laterally too, these details are left incomplete.

The niches are sunk rather deep, and in them are shown *dvāra-pālas*, one in each, in shallow relief. The massive club of the northern *dvāra-pāla* was chipped off for a water-outlet from the shrine-cell at a later stage, when the *paṭṭikā*-moulding of the *adhishṭhāna* below this niche was also broken. The cell is almost cubical and contains a black polished, fluted (sixteen-sided), tall *liṅga* planted into the socket in the floor of the shrine with the *āvuḍaiyār* in two pieces slipped over it. The *āvuḍaiyār* is also of the same material and polish. Its lower portion is missing, the upper portion alone hanging like a ring halfway up the height of the *liṅga*. The place of the *āvuḍaiyār* base is marked by a circular groove concentric with the central socket. On the back wall is cut a shallow panel with a bas-relief of Sōmāskanda flanked by Vishṇu and Brahmā and with a parasol in the background behind Śiva, Umā and Skanda, who are seated on a throne. Two similar Sōmāskanda panels are cut on the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* on either side of the shrine-entrance coming opposite to the space between the end pilaster and the pillar of that side and two more polished fluted *liṅgas* in *āvuḍaiyārs* are placed in front of them on the *maṇḍapa*-floor.

The cave, on plan and in style, is of the Mahēndra type. But it also differs from that type in having slender, flatter and taller pillars and fluted corbels of good proportions, showing that it is only a later and slightly altered copy of Mahēndra's model excavated by Rājasiṁha. The carving of the three Sōmāskanda panels, particularly the one in the shrine, and the subsequent installation of the fluted type or *dhārā-liṅga* are characteristic of the period of Rājasiṁha and his successors. It is, therefore, proper that Rājasiṁha named the cave-temple after one of his titles as *Atiraṇachaṇḍēśvara-gṛiham*.

The two Sanskrit inscriptions, copies of the same in two different contemporary scripts (Pallava-Grantha and north Indian) state definitely that the cave-temple was excavated by Atiraṇachaṇḍa as the abode for Śiva with Umā and Skanda and the *gaṇas*.[1] The Pallava-Grantha inscription, in seventeen lines, is on the southern flank of the cutting in front of the façade, while the Nāgari one, on the northern flank opposite, runs to sixteen lines. While the six principal verses are common to both, there is an additional seventh verse in the Pallava-Grantha[2] version eulogizing the musical talents of the composer, Kālakāla, which is, incidentally, a surname of Rājasiṁha himself, found in the Kāñchī Kailāsanātha inscription of his queen Raṅgapatākā.[3] Of these, the first and second verses are identical with the eighth and ninth verses of Atyantakāma's (Paramēśvara's) inscriptions in the Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam and Gaṇēsa-ratha and the fourth with the fourth

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[1] Dubreuil in his *Pallava Antiquities*, pt. I, pp. 66-68, discusses this cave-temple with reference to its inscription and states that it belongs, by its inscriptions, to the time of Rājasiṁha. Sivaramamurti (*Mahābalipuram*, p. 39) notices that this cave has intriguing features, as, according to him, while the massive pillars, simple corbel-capitals and the *dvāra-pālas* indicate its early date, the fluted *liṅga* inside and the Somāskanda panels both in the cell and in the *maṇḍapa* are late characteristics.

[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, nos. 21 and 22, pp. 6-8; also XII, nos. 24 and 25, pp. 11 and 12 and *Epigraphia Indica*, X, nos. 23 and 24.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 29.

of the two inscriptions of Atyantakāma. Thus, the three new verses here, which are not repetitions, are the third, fifth and sixth, which are also important in respect of their contents. They read:

Verse 3. *Tēn-ēdaṁ kāritaṁ Śambhōr=bhavanaṁ bhūtayē bhuvaḥ* [।*]
Kailāsa-Mandara-nibhaṁ bhūbhṛitāṁ mūrdhni tishṭatā ॥

Verse 5. *Atiraṇa-chaṇḍaḥ patir=avanibhujāṁ=Atiraṇa chaṇḍēśvaram-idam-akarōt* [।*]
iha Giri-tanayā-Guha-gaṇa-sahitō niyatā-kṛita-ratir-bhavatu Paśupatiḥ ॥

Verse 6. *Gurvvīm- Īśāna-bhaktiṁ śriyam=atiśayinīṁ durvvahaṁ bhāram=urvvyā*
nis-sāmānyañ=cha dānaṁ samam=A[*tira*]*ṇachaṇḍā-khyayā* [*yōbibhartti*] [।*]
sthānē nirmmāpitē=smin=vi[*dita Raṇa*] *jaya-khyātinā tēna bharthā*
bhūtānām-Ashṭamūrtiś=chiram=Atiraṇacha[*ṇḍēśvarē*] *yātu nishṭhām* [॥]

The temple is designated by the term *bhavanaṁ* and is likened to the Kailāsa and Mandara, which, along with Mēru, form the traditional types of *vimānas* in *Śilpa* and *Āgama* —architecture and tradition. The verses say that the temple, *Śambhōr bhavanam*, also called *Atiraṇachaṇḍēśvaram*, was made (excavated) by Atiraṇachaṇḍa for Śiva with his consort Umā (Giri-tanayā) and Skanda (Guha), and the attendant *gaṇas* to take delight in residing in it; and again implores that Ashṭamūrti—the eight-formed lord, (Śiva)[1], may reside for long in this abode, the Atiraṇachaṇḍēśvara. Thus, there is a clear reference to the Sōmāskanda form sculptured on the hind wall of the shrine.

The other surnames of the king, besides *Atiraṇachaṇḍa*, were *Atyantakāma*, *Śrīnidhi*, *Kāmarāja*, *Śrībhara*, *Dhanañjaya* and *Saṁgrāma-dhīra*. Since most of the surnames including Atiraṇachaṇḍa are also applied to Rājasiṁha in his Kāñchīpuram inscription, this inscription also must be attributed to him. Though some of the titles like Atyantakāma were borne by Paramēśvara, and a few of the verses in his and Atiraṇachaṇḍa's inscriptions, which are purely eulogistic of the king are identical, the other titles such as Atiraṇachaṇḍa and those in common with Rājasiṁha's Kāñchīpuram inscription as also the *dhāra-liṅga* in addition to the Sōmāskanda panel in the shrine would confirm the attribution of this cave-temple to Rājasiṁha. It cannot also be that it was started in the time of Mahēndra or Māmalla and completed or consecrated by Rājasiṁha after three or four intervening reigns.

This is another instance which clearly shows that in the Pallava cave-temples of the time of Mahēndra, the *liṅga* was not cut out of the same rock, and that it was installed at a later stage, perhaps beginning from the time of Rājasiṁha, who introduced late in his time the polished fluted *liṅgas* in front of the Sōmāskanda stone panel on the hind walls of the *garbha-gṛiha* already introduced by Paramēśvara.

[1] The *ashṭamūrti* forms of Śiva are *pṛithvī* (earth), *ap* (water), *tējas* (fire or light), *vāyu* (air), *ākāśa* outer space), *Sūrya* (sun), *Chandra* (moon) and *yajamāna* (the Lord). Fire, Sun and Moon are often equated with the 'three fires' and the three eyes of Śiva. The lord of the eight elements or forms are *Bhava*, *Śārva*, *Īśāna*, *Paśupati*, *Bhīma*, *Mahādēva* (or *Mahatōrdēva*), *Ugra*, and *Rudra*. This *ashṭa-mūrta* concept of Śiva was prevalent in contemporary time as is attested to by the *T̄vāram* saints (*Nāyaṉmārs*), Sambhandar, *Tēvāram*, I, vv. 111 and 571, II vv. 1948 and 2743, III, v. 3342; Appar *T̄vāram*, IV, verse 4708, V, v. 5270, VI, v. 7163; and Sundarar *Tēvāram* VII, verses 7309 and 8043. Māṇikkavāchakar also refers in many contexts in his *Tiruvāchakam* to the *ashṭa-mūrta* form of Śiva. In Sanskrit literature *ashṭa-mūrti* or eight formed Śiva is identified with the five elements, mind, egoism and *prakṛiti* or according to the opening of the *Sākuntala* with the five elements, the sun and moon and the sacrificing priest, (see *Mahābhārata*, iii v. 1939; also Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, II, pp. 45 and 405).

The very tall polished *liṅga* without fluting planted in the sands in front of the temple referred to by Longhurst[1] and believed by him to be the original *liṅga* discarded at the time of the subsequent installation of the fluted *liṅga* would not go into the shrine, because of its great height and also would not be appropriate with the Sōmāskanda panel behind. Perhaps it belonged to the ruined structural temple that stood near by, the stones of which are now spread over the floor of the *maṇḍapa* of the cave-temple, while some more are built into the approach-steps on either side of the cave-temple. There is also a group of *sapta-mātṛikā* sculptures in a shed near by which might have belonged to the structural temple, the existence of which is known from another inscription on an exposed rock in the vicinity.

About 20 ft. away in front of the cave-temple is a small low boulder, on the front vertical face of which is cut a bas-relief panel 6 ft. × 3 ft. showing Mahishamardinī (pl. XXXVI). This is interesting not only from the point of view of the grouping of the figures but also from the fact that it differs in detail from the well-known Mahishamardinī panel at Mahābalipuram (p. 154). Here Durgā is more or less ambling over the rearing lion, her right leg planted on a *padmāsana* on the ground and her left leg with knee lifted up in *ūrdhva-jānu*, suggesting perhaps her dismounting. Durgā is six-armed, holds *śaṅkha, chakra, dhanus, khaḍga*, etc., and leans on the leaping lion, the pose being *ālīḍha*. Below the lion is one of her *gaṇas* striking at the back of retreating Mahishāsura. Mahishāsura is on the run and his right arm is being mauled by a lion-cub, while on top of his head sits another *gaṇa* striking with his sword. In front of Mahishāsura runs another *asura* similarly belaboured by a *gaṇa*. Behind Mahishamardinī are four more *gaṇas*, one carrying a parasol, another a sword and shield, a third blowing a conch and a fourth brandishing a club. Another peculiarity is that besides the *gaṇas*, none of the *yōginīs* or female attendants of Durgā are shown. This sculpture, like the cave-temple near by is of the time of Rājasiṁha. There is a great similarity in style between this and the Sōmāskanda groups inside the cave-temple.

PERIOD III

Kīḻmāvilaṅgai: Vishṇu rock-cut cell (fig. 25; pl. XXXVII A)

Kīḻmāvilaṅgai in Tiṇḍivaṇam Taluk, South Arcot District, is a small village, 7 miles north of Tiṇḍivaṇam. Outside the village located amidst fields is a low outcrop. There is a small rock-cut cell (pl. XXXVII A) excavated on the eastern face of a free-standing small boulder. On its irregular eastern face, the rock-surface has been cut back to a depth of 3 ft. at the bottom and 1 ft. at the top (the cutting measuring 4½ ft. × 5½ ft.), in order to reach a vertical face, from which point the cell proper has been excavated. The entrance to the cell measures 2½ ft. × 5 ft., the rock between the initial cutting and the cell-entrance of either side providing two jambs for the entrance. On the inside also the lateral walls are cut in so as to throw the jambs into relief. The lintel and sill have not thus been differentiated.

The cell is about 3 ft. deep and on its back wall is cut the figure of four-armed Vishṇu standing in *sama-bhaṅga* on an oblong platform about a foot high. The upper two hands hold the *śaṅkha* and *chakra* (in the *prayōga* posture without flames), the lower right is in *abhaya* and the lower left in *kaṭi*. Vishṇu wears a tall *kirīṭa-makuṭa* and *makara-kuṇḍalas* in both his pendant ear-lobes. The hanging *jaṭā-bhāra* is dressed behind the head in the

[1] Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. II, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

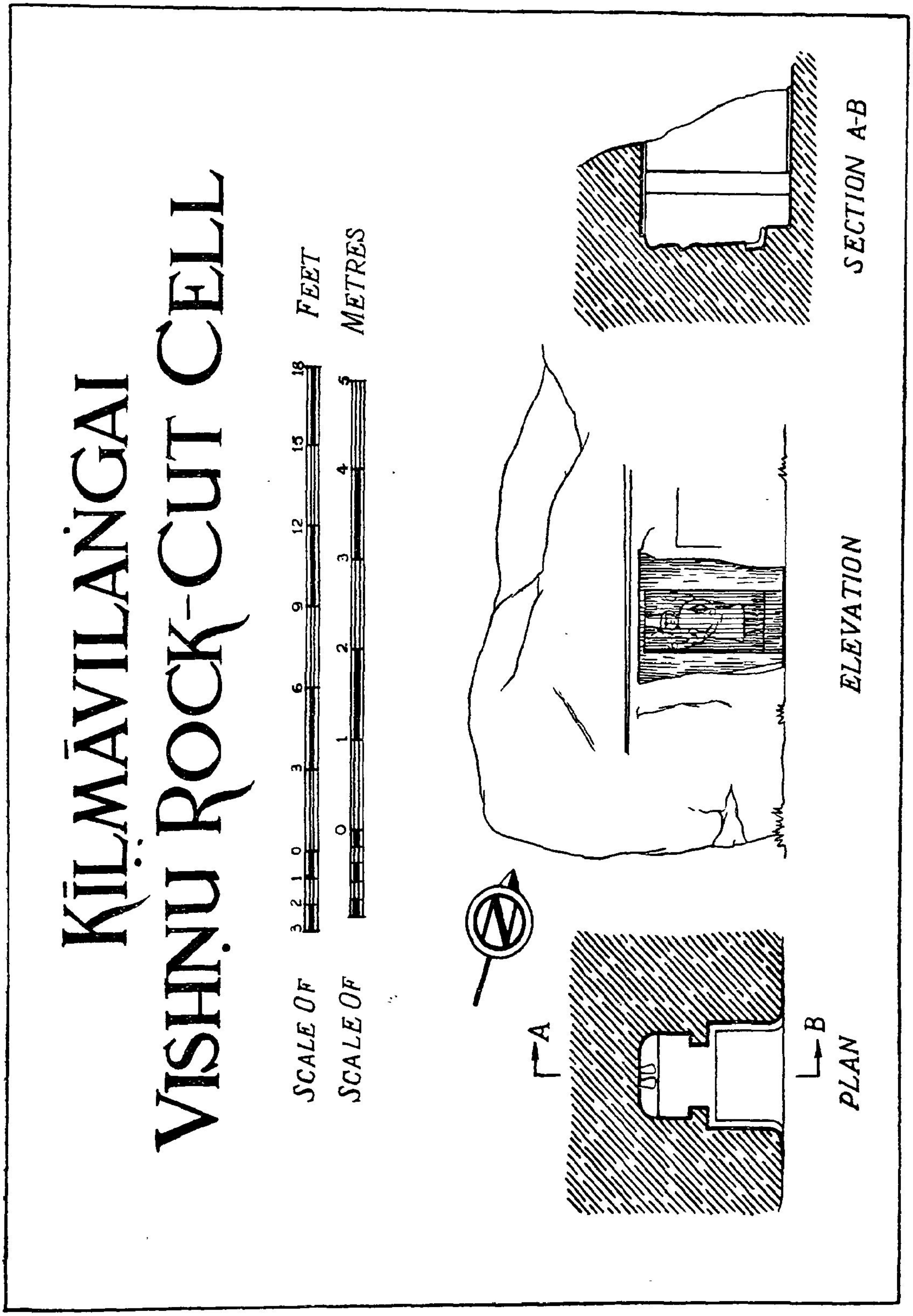
KĪḶMĀVILAṄGAI
VISHṆU ROCK-CUT CELL
SCALE OF FEET
3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18
SCALE OF METRES
0 1 2 3 4 5
N
A
B
PLAN
ELEVATION
SECTION A-B

Fig. 25

form of an oval *śirāśchakra.* The *yajñōpavīta* is worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion and the *vastra* is worn in a peculiar mode, its hem reaching midway between the knee and the ankle, and quite unlike the *vastra* of the Vishṇu in the Trimūrti cave temple at Mahābalipuram, in the lower rock-cut cave-temple at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and in the rock-cut Śiva cave-temple near Tiruveḷḷaṟai (which, however, has *prayōga-chakra* with flames). Round the waist is a loose cloth tied round with two tassels on either side. The arms are adorned by *valayas* at the wrists and *kēyūras* at the elbows. The sculpture is rather stiff and flat, though in fairly bold relief. The facial features have been obscured by vandals. On either side of the jamb is a *dvāra-pāla* cut almost in outline in very low relief and hardly differentiated from the rock behind. They both face the cell-entrance and not front as in the Mahēndra caves.

Dubreuil, Longhurst and others[1] attribute this cave-temple to Mahēndravarman. It may be remarked here that none of the caves that are definitely attributable to Mahēndravarman by inscriptions has a bas-relief sculpture in the central shrine and this sculpture too does not compare well with the other early Pallava Vishṇu forms. It is evident that it is a much later sculpture, though not later than Nandivarman's time. It is to be attributed to the period after Rājasiṁha. This is the only example of a simple cave-shrine which is hardly more than a deep niche or cell in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, though there are some of date corresponding to the later Pallava in the Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍya areas in the districts farther south as in Malayaḍippaṭṭi, Nārttāmalai (Śiva cave), Malayakkōil, Malaikkoḷundīśvaram (Pudukkōṭṭai), Tiruchchuḷi, Mahipālaṇpaṭṭi and Pirāṇmalai which this resembles. This cave-cell in Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam and others of non-Pallava origin outside will not conform to the *maṇḍapa* type of cave-temples of Mahēndra or Māmalla or of the contemporary dynasties in the south. They simulate more or less the interior aspects of the *vimāna* (*garbha-gṛiha*) sometimes showing greater details in the front elevation as exemplified by the Trimūrti cave at Mahābalipuram.

Vallam II: lower (Śiva) cave-temple (fig. 26; pl. XXXVII B)

The lower cave-temple immediately below the Mahēndra cave (called Vasantīśvaram or Vēdāntēśvara) in Vallam, Chingleput Taluk and District, consists essentially of a slightly oblong shrine-cell with a narrow verandah in front without any pillars on the façade. The entrance to the inner cell is through an oblong opening occupying a third of the width of the back wall of the verandah. On either side are *dvāra-pālas* in low bas-relief, identical in all respects, both standing cross-legged, heads turned towards the cave, the right arm hanging over a massive club stuck up in the arm-pit, the left placed akimbo (*kaṭi*). The *dvāra-pāla* on the south has a more frontal aspect than the one on the north. The southern *dvāra-pāla* wears a *jaṭā-bhāra* flowing down on either side of the face while in the case of the northern *dvāra-pāla* the hair is done up into a large top-knot. Both wear enormous *kuṇḍalas.* A *liṅga* of black stone is planted on the floor of the shrine-cell and the *āvuḍaiyār* made up of three pieces has been added to it. The two lower pieces of the *āvuḍaiyar* forming the two halves of the part are closed round the lower portion of the *liṅga,* while the top piece with the central hole has been slipped down from above. This is apparently a later addition. There is no differentiation of the shrine-doorway into jamb, lintel and sill.

The façade of the verandah or *maṇḍapa* is cut deep from the external curved surface

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[1] Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities,* pt. I, p. 46; Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture,* pt. I, p. 21.

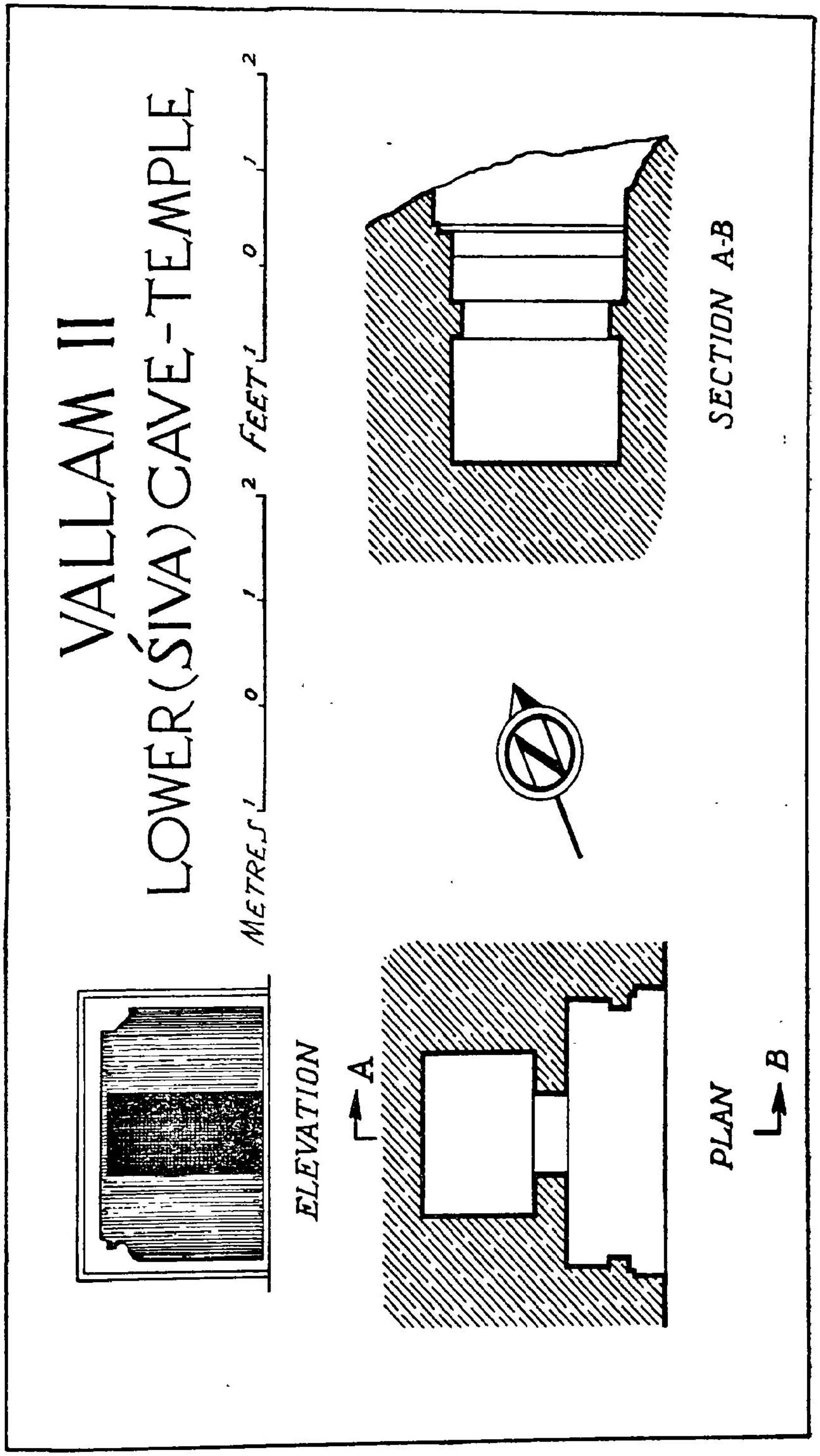
VALLAM II
LOWER (ŚIVA) CAVE-TEMPLE
METRES 1 0 1 2
FEET 1 0 1 2
ELEVATION
A
PLAN
B
SECTION A-B

Fig. 26

of the rock so that the ledge of the overhanging boulder acts as the cornice, devoid of any characterization or ornamentation usual to *kapōtas*. There is no drip ledge or mortise-hole over the top line of the façade of this cave to suggest the addition of a structural front *maṇḍapa*. The façade itself is simple with two pilasters, one at either extremity carrying on top corbels, broken but apparently with an original curved profile. On the southern side on the lateral rock face just in front of the pilaster is a shallow relief of a *valampuri* Gaṇēśa seated on a lotus. There are no clues to show that this is an early excavation of the time of Mahēndra I, contemporary with the cave-temple above. But the nature of the excavation, which is like some of the Muttaraiyar and Pāṇḍya caves of the later Pallava period and the presence of Gaṇēśa would indicate it to be a much later excavation probably of the time of Nandivaraman II Pallavamalla.

Vallam III: northern (Vishṇu) cave-temple (fig. 27; pl. XXXVII C)

The third excavation at Vallam, Chingleput Taluk and District, just slightly at a lower level from the top and to the north of the other two cave-temples essentially resembles the lower excavation on the southern side. The shrine-cell is oblong again, and contains a later group of Vishṇu and his two Dēvīs sculptured in the round. On either side of the entrance are narrow niches, each with a *dvāra-pāla*. Both are identical in dress and pose, facing front, the inner arms (i.e. left of the southern and right of the northern *dvāra-pāla*) held up in adoration, while the outer are placed in *kaṭi*. The *yajñōpavīta* is worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion. Both wear *makuṭas* and *kuṇḍalas*. The façade in front has pilasters at either extremity with corbels on top cut on the lower side of the beam. In between these are two more full corbels without the supporting pillars below. The supporting pillars, which should have been very slender have been broken off and removed. The corbels have more angular than curved profiles. On the northern wall of the narrow front *maṇḍapa* and facing south is what appears to be a standing Durgā, four-armed, the two lower in *abhaya* and *kaṭi*, the two upper holding *chakra* and *śaṅkha*.

There is a narrow drip-ledge cut on the face of the rock above the top line of the excavation and between them are four mortise-holes, perhaps intended for the insertion of wooden joists, which supported the roof of a structural *maṇḍapa* in front. The simple nature of the excavation with a cell and small *maṇḍapa* with slender pillars and pilasters are later features which would mark this cave as belonging to the later Pallava period, after the time of Rājasiṁha.

THE MĀMALLA STYLE

Mahābalipuram: Koṇēri-maṇḍapam, five-celled (Śiva) cave-temple (fig. 28; pls. XXXVIII A and XXXIX A)

This five-celled rock-cut Śiva temple at Mahābalipuram should be the real Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam, as it directly overlooks the Kōṇēri-paḷḷam tank in front of it.[1] This cave-temple is excavated on the western flank of the main whale-backed hill with an almost vertical scarp, the excavation being recessed sufficiently both at the bottom and the top, naturally more at the bottom than at the top, in accordance with the outer vertical contour of the rock-face. The cutting at the base affords a two-stepped platform in front of the façade and a rock-cut step at the centre. The recessing on top is just sufficient for the carving

[1] Sivaramamurti, *Mahābalipuram*, p. 22, calls the unfinished excavation just to the north of this and beyond the limits of the tank the *Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam*, which is obviously a mistake.

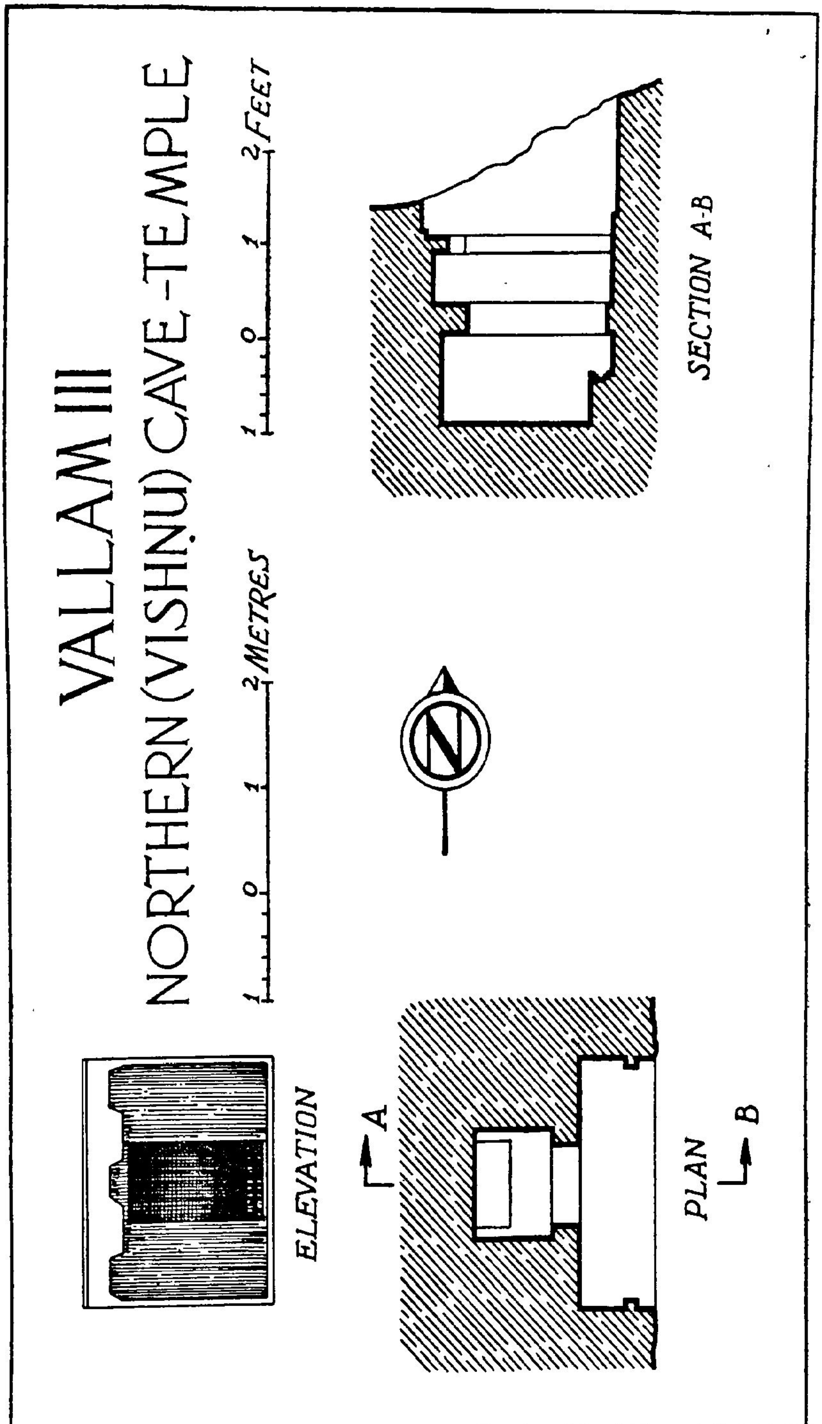
VALLAM III
NORTHERN (VISHṆU) CAVE-TEMPLE
1 0 1 2 METRES
1 0 1 2 FEET
ELEVATION
PLAN
A
B
SECTION A-B

Fig. 27

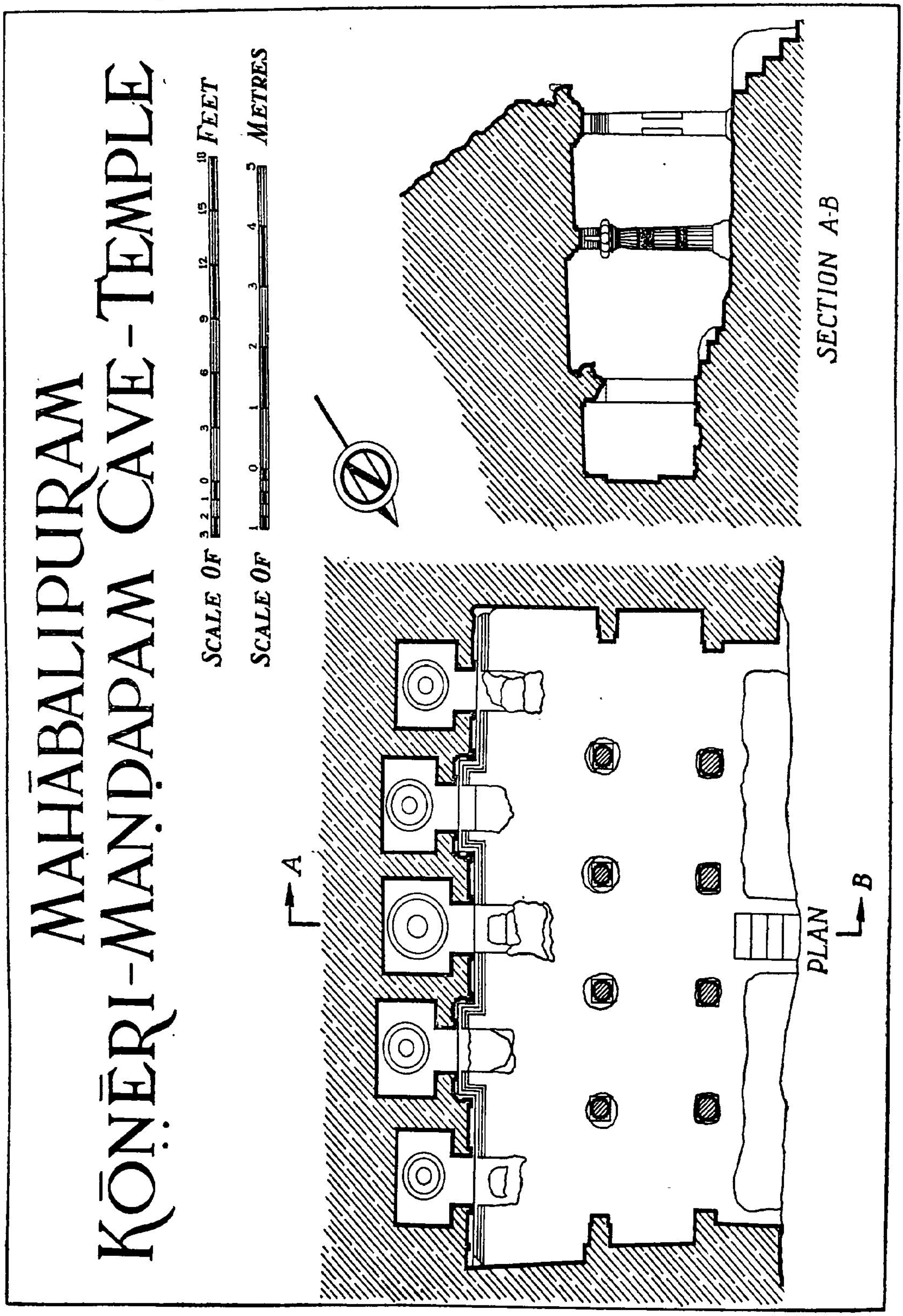
MAHĀBALIPURAM
KŌṆĒṚI-MAṆḌAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
A
B
PLAN

FIG. 28

out of the elaborate *kapōta* of the *prastara* and above it of a row of five projecting *śālās* with six recessed lengths of *hārāntara* connecting them. Each of the five projecting *śālās* or *kōshṭhas* has an oblong *masūraka* showing the *vyāḷavari* with projecting *makara*-heads at the corners, an oblong recessed *grīvā* over it carrying a *śālā-śikhara* having a median frontal *alpa-nāsikā*, composed of paired pilasters, covered over by a small *tōraṇa*-arch. Each of the *śālās* has four *stūpis* over the ridge. The four recessed lengths of cloisters connecting these five *śālās* have, each of them, two frontal *alpa-nāsikās* with pilasters surmounted by *makara*-arches with shovel-shaped finials as found over the typical Pallava *kūḍu*. Over the ridge of each *hārāntara* are placed three *stūpis*, the central one coming in between and behind the two flat finials of the *alpa-nāsikās*, while the remaining two are placed one on either side. The two extreme bits of cloister or *hārāntara* lengths, being half the length of the intervening bits, have, however, only one *alpa-nāsikā* in front with the flat finial on top and two *stūpis* over the ridge one on either side of the flat piece, the other half merging into the rock. Below the *vyāḷavari* is the projecting and well-flexed *kapōta*, which is quite curved and has over its front line ten *kūḍus* arranged in five pairs, each pair corresponding to the projecting *śālā* above and the *aṅkaṇa* between the pillars below. The *kūḍus* are typical and had perhaps shovel-finials inserted on top. Inside the *kūḍu*-arches are carved human faces, one in each, each pair facing towards the centre of the *aṅkaṇa* (i.e. towards the corresponding shrine inside). The under-surface of the *kapōta* is well-channelled and below it comes a *valabhī* with a frieze of *haṁsas*, thirty in all, each *haṁsa* representing the decorated front end of the terrace-joist. Below the *haṁsa-mālā* which is carried by a wide and thin plank or *vājana*, shown as an offset, both on the outside and inside, is cut the main *uttira* thinner than in the earlier Mahēndra caves and placed over *taraṅga*-corbels of the same width, the height of the *uttira* being two-fifths the height of the corbel (i.e., 6 in. as against 15 in.). The corbels are 3¾ ft. long, i.e. nearly thrice their own width which is identical with that of the top *śaduram* of the pillars below, viz., 1 ft. 3 in. The height of the top *śaduram* is 5/9 that of the length of the corbel, i.e., it measures 25 in. The *taraṅga*-corbels are without the median *paṭṭa* or band.

Cut below the beam and carrying the corbels or *pōtikās* are four pillars and two pilasters on the façade, the two pilasters tetragonal throughout, while the four pillars are of the usual type with *śadurams* at base and apex and an intermediate *kaṭṭu*. The top *śaduram* is shorter in height (25 in. as mentioned above) and while the height of the *kaṭṭu* is 30 in., the height of the lower *śaduram* including base is 36 in. On the whole, the pillars, corbels and beam are more slender and elegant than in the case of the pillars of the Mahēndra style cave-temples, excavated by Mahēndra and his successors. Columnation also is wider. In their measurements they have assumed almost the normal proportions of the pillars of the structural *maṇḍapas* and later temples.

Behind the pillars is cut the *mukha-maṇḍapa*, the floor of which is raised 5 ft. above the present ground-level and reached by a flight of four rock-cut steps in front, which end below at a height of 2½ ft. from the ground-level, this part being supplemented by loose stone steps. This would show that the ground-level in front was originally higher than at present and the rock-cut steps started from this level. The steps are flanked by simple straight-cut parapets. On either side of the *sōpāna*, the rock is cut back forming a stepped basement or gallery with a lower platform and an upper platform, almost equal to the width of the *kapōta*, in front of the pillars of the façade.

The *mukha-maṇḍapa* behind the façade is a narrow oblong hall; the end walls are plain and the ceiling fairly even. There are, however, some unfinished patches both on the ceiling and the lateral walls; and the floor towards either end is not also even. The corbel of the northern pilaster of the front row too is unfinished.

Behind the *mukha-maṇḍapa* is another row of four pillars and two pilasters in alignment with those of the front row (pl. XXXIX A), but totally differing from them in shape, width and features. The two extreme pilasters have a tetragonal section throughout, but unlike the plain pilasters of the outer row are ornamented and mounted on unfinished bases or *pīṭhas* (*ōma*). At about the middle of the height of the shaft in both the pilasters is a plain band or *madhya-bandha* or *paṭṭa*, while the top of the shaft has a very wide *padma-bandha* decoration formed of lotus-petals above, flowers and creepers below them and hanging *muktāsaras* (*mālāsthāna*) in the lowermost part. Above the *padma-bandha*, the pilasters carry the regular capital-components all tretragonal in section such as the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha* and *kumbha*, but without the usual *padma* and *phalaka* (doucene and abacus). The *pōtikā* is of the *taraṅga*-type and is mounted on top of the *kumbha* over a short *vīra-kaṇṭha*. Over the *pōtikā* runs the beam of the same width and height as the *pōtikā* (9 in.). The intervening four pillars are essentially cylindrical on plan. They are mounted on plinths (*ōma*), as the pilasters are of greater width than the pillars. The shafts (*kāl*) of these four pillars, likewise, are decorated at their middle height by a circular floral *madhya-bandha* incomplete in some of the pillars. At the top of each, again is a wide *padma-bandha mālāsthāna* decoration as on the pilasters. While the pillars are cylindrical at these two regions of decoration, the intervening parts as well as the members of the capital above are polygonal with sixteen sides. Like the pilasters the capital-members over the *padma-bandha*, consisting of the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, and *kumbha* (and devoid of the *padma* and *phalaka*), are also sixteen-sided. The *kumbha* is a flattish bulbous member and coming over it, and separated by a short *vīra-kaṇṭha*, are the *taraṅga-pōtikās*. The *taraṅga-pōtikās* of these inner row, unlike those of the pillars of the façade, have a median *paṭṭa*, as if binding the rolls of the *taraṅga*. The presence of the Mahēndra type pillars on the façade, and the fully-formed pillars with capitals of the " order " in the inner row, as also the appearance of the *paṭṭa* in the corbels, mark the transition, and as such would place this cave-temple at the beginning of the Māmalla series. The broad *phalaka* characteristic of the period was perhaps omitted, since within the short and equal spans between the pillars, they would approximate each other and be too prominent obscuring the view of things behind.

Behind the pillars, comes the *ardha-maṇḍapa* slightly better finished than the *mukha-maṇḍapa*. While its two side walls and its ceiling have been practically evenly finished, its floor, as extant, is very uneven. There are no sculptures either in the *ardha-maṇḍapa*.

Cut out from the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is a row of five shrine-fronts (pl. XL) mounted on a continuous *adhishṭhāna* and with their walls and *prastaras* contiguous, but with the central and extreme shrine-fronts projected more than the two intervening shrine-fronts. This row leaves a space of 1½ ft. at either end, where the original idea was perhaps to turn in the corners of the mouldings, but this work was left incomplete. The three projecting shrine-fronts are of larger width than the two recessed shrines, the proportion between them appearing to be in the ratio of 11 : 9 as deduced from the external width of the shrine-chambers, the width of their door-openings and the width of their pilasters respectively. The plan reproduced here is that of a row of three large shrines, interconnected by the lengths of the hind wall of the *maṇḍapa* which correspond to the recessed lengths, with openings for cells behind them. The projected *vimāna*-fronts correspond to the three projected *śālās* and the two recessed ones to the two intervening *hārāntara* lengths of the *hāra* over the façade.

The *adhishṭhāna* has the *jagatī*, *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, *paṭṭikā* and *prati* mouldings cut. The *kumuda* is *tripaṭṭa* and above and below it are *kampa*-mouldings. The *adhishṭhāna* is well-defined in its mouldings in the case of the central shrine and the recessed shrine to the north of it, but has not been completed below the *kumuda* in the case of the other shrines.

Projecting forward from the *adhishṭhāna* of each *vimāna*-front and reaching halfway up the floor of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, are five separate *sōpānas*, each with a flight of four steps, perhaps intended to end in a *chandra-śilā* at the base. The steps of the projecting shrines were intended to be flanked by parapets, while those of the recessed shrines were not thus protected on their flanks. Not only were the *sōpānas* left incomplete, but in whatever stage they were left they have been mostly destroyed subsequently as also the floor below. The front walls of the three projecting shrines rising above the *adhishṭhāna* have each four pilasters or *kuḍya-stambhas*, the central two flanking the entrance to the *garbha-gṛiha*, the extreme two cantoning the corners which turn in. In the case of the two recessed shrines, the *vimāna*-fronts present only two pilasters flanking the entrances to the cells, the cantoning pilasters at the corners being absent and perhaps not shown, since they represent the *maṇḍapa*-wall merging into the adjacent lateral walls of the projecting shrines. The pilasters in all the cases are tetragonal with long slender shafts without base, and with all the components of a typical pillar, viz., a wide and elaborately moulded *padma-bandha*, *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, *kumbha*, *padma*, *phalaka* and *vīra-kaṇṭha*. On top of the *vīra-kaṇṭha* are cut *pōtikās* with curved profiles and *taraṅga*-ornaments in all the cases, except the southernmost shrine where the rolls have not been cut. Over the corbels runs the principal beam of the shrine, the beam being of the same height and width as the corbels. Over the beam or *uttira* runs a second member with a bevelled front, the *valabhī* decorated with a frieze of *haṁsas*, six in the *haṁsa-mālā* of the projecting shrines and eight in the recessed shrines, and in consequence differently spaced in the two types of shrines. Above this is projected the curved *kapōta* with pairs of *kūḍu*-arches in its front line, each pair coming over the respective shrine-entrance below. The *kūḍu*-arches are typical and resemble in all respects those over the façade outside including the human heads inside them. The corners of the *kapōta* corresponding to the corners of the projecting shrines are decorated in addition with embossed scroll-work, representing the corner bracing (*kōṇa-paṭṭa*) and at this point the *kapōta* is supported as it were by butting *vyālas* rearing up, with their hind legs planted firmly on the *phalakas* of the pilasters below. These *vyālas* representing the *koḍuṅgai* or curved bracket are in different stages of completion and in the case of the northernmost shrine, much of the *kapōta*—the corbels, *vyālas* and *phalakas* as well as the *haṁsavari* has been damaged by vandals.

On either side of each shrine-entrance and cut in shallow niches are fine bas-reliefs of *dvāra-pālas*, differing in details from one another, though forming regular pairs. Of the two *dvāra-pālas* of the northernmost shrine, the northern one is unfortunately almost chipped away leaving only a faint outline, the stance suggesting a rather feminine pose. The right hand is placed in *kaṭi* and the left hand near the shrine-entrance is in *sūchi*. The other figure on the southern side has the left hand in *kaṭi* and the right hand raised up in the *tarjanī* pose. Part of this figure has also been badly mutilated, but enough remains to show the form of head-dress, ornaments and apparel. The *vastra-yajñōpavīta* is worn in the normal fashion.

The recessed shrine coming immediately to the south of the above has two *dvāra-pālas* of more or less the conventional type and expression, facing front in contrast with the profiles of the two preceding. They slightly tend to the semi-profile. The northern one wears the *yajñopavīta* in the *nivīta*-fashion, the southern one wears it in the normal *upavīta*-fashion, the *yajñōpavīta* being a garland of flowers strung up. Another point of difference between them is the presence of the two curved horns behind the head-dress of the southern *dvāra-pāla*, suggesting him to be a representation of Nandi, and their absence in the case of the northern one. Both hold their inner hands (left in the case of the northern and right in the case of the southern) in *sūchi* pointing towards the shrine, while their outer hands rest on their hips in *kaṭi*. Otherwise the two *dvāra-pālas* are similar to each other in respect

of ornaments, head-gear and dress, and but for the presence of side-tusks and horns in one of them they can be said to be almost human figures.

The projecting central-shrine has again a different pair of *dvāra-pālas*, more like royal figures than conventional forms. They wear *kirīṭa-makuṭas* and long garlands, (*vana-mālā*) worn in the *upavīta*-fashion by the northern *dvāra-pāla* over the left shoulder reaching to the right ankle and by the southern *dvāra-pāla* over the right shoulder reaching to the left ankle. The northern *dvāra-pāla* has in addition the real *vastra-yajñōpavīta* worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion while the southern *dvāra-pāla* does not have it. The left hand of the northern *dvāra-pāla* nearer the shrine-entrance is pointing towards the same in *sūchi* pose, while the right is placed on the hip in the *kaṭi* pose. This is reversed in the case of the southern *dvāra-pāla*, who has his right hand nearer the shrine in *sūchi* and the left in *kaṭi*. While the southern *dvāra-pāla* has the two curved horns behind his *makuṭa* the northern *dvāra-pāla* does not have them. Except for these differences they are alike in all other respects, e.g., head-gear, ornaments and dress.

The recessed shrine on the southern side has a totally different set of *dvāra-pālas* more facing front, as in the recessed shrine of the north. They conform to the conventional type with cross legs (reversed in each case for symmetry) their inner hands (the left of north and right of south) resting on tops of massive clubs and their outer hands resting on their hips in *kaṭi*. Their facial expression is furious, enhanced by the side tusks and bulged-out eyes. While in all other respects they are similar, the two differ in their head-dress and in the manner of wearing the *yajñōpavīta*. The northern *dvāra-pāla* has his entire hair done up into conical *jaṭā-makuṭa* with a few curls set with jewels and a few curls flying behind; the southern one wears a *jaṭā-bhāra* flanking either side of the face with a conical cap above. The northern *dvāra-pāla* wears the *yajñōpavīta* in the *nīvīta*-fashion, while the southern one wears it in the normal fashion.

The southernmost projecting shrine has again a slightly different set of *dvāra-pālas*, more resembling those of the central projecting shrine and like them approximating human portraits. They differ from the *dvāra-pālas* of the central shrine in not having the long garlands worn in the *upavīta* and *prāchīnāvīta*-fashion reaching up to the ankle and in both of them having real *yajñōpavītas*, the northern one wearing it in the *nīvīta*-fashion, while the southern one in the normal fashion. Otherwise, in head-gear, ornaments and apparel they are not only identical with each other but also similar to the *dvāra-pālas* of the central shrine.

The *dvāra-pālas* of the projecting shrines are obviously shown in greater profile than those of the recessed shrines, because the niches containing them are narrower, coming as they do between two pilasters, whereas the niches of the recessed shrines have pilasters only on their inner sides and as such are wider.

Over the *kapōta* of the shrine-fronts runs a *vyāḷavari*, the *vyālas* shown almost full in lateral aspect, two pairs for each shrine all facing towards the centre, i.e. the shrine-entrance. The carving out of the *vyālas* in the *vyāla-mālā* shows different stages of completion. They are more marked out in the two southernmost shrines and in the recessed shrine on the north than in the case of the central and northern projecting shrines.

The shrine-entrances are devoid of jambs, lintels and sills and are framed only by the pilasters on the sides and *uttira* on top. The excavation of the cells inside is more oblong than cubical and the floors have sockets for the installation of *liṅgas* with an outer circular groove marking the accommodation for the base of the *āvuḍaiyār*. These sockets were perhaps later, since the *liṅga*-sockets are shallow and the *āvuḍaiyārs* are not generally found in the earlier Pallava cave-temples. (In cases where they are now present as in Vallam,

Orukal-maṇḍapam, and other places the extant *liṅga* has been installed as a separate piece and is not rock-cut, and the *āvuḍaiyār* slipped over it perhaps in subsequent times. The absence of a rock-cut *liṅga* in these cells as also an outlet for *abhishēka* water is worthy of note). On the back walls of these shrines, the three central at the same depth and the two extreme a little forward, are cut almost-square and plain niches; perhaps the idea was to fit wooden Sōmāskanda or other bas-reliefs in them as in the later temples of the Pallava period or fill them by stucco figures or painted panels of the respective deities as in the earlier series. Evidently this cave-temple was dedicated to Siva, perhaps in his five aspects.[1]

This temple, like some other ones at Mahābalipuram, was in later times occupied by the Vaishṇavites, who destroyed the Śaiva vestiges and engraved the Vaishṇava symbols of *śaṅkha* and *chakra* on the two flanks of the excavation in front of the façade. There are no inscriptions associated with the cave-temple which can help in dating it. It may, however, be a transition-form and attributed to the early period of Māmalla, since in addition to having some features characteristic of the Mahēndra style, it shows certain other advanced features as found in the *rathas* and cave-temples of the Māmalla style.

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam cave-temple (fig. 29; pls. XXXVIII B, XXXIX B and XLI-XLIV)

This excavation facing west is cut into an almost vertical scarp at the end of a large whale-back boulder at Mahābalipuram and consists of a front *maṇḍapa* with a shrine behind. The façade, recessed by about 1 ft. 6 in. from the outer face of the adjoining length of rock, consists of a row of two pillars and two pilasters with ōma and a moulded *adhishṭhāna* cut at the base. Projecting from the centre of the *adhishṭhāna* is a rock-cut *sōpāna* with three steps. While the general rock-face is almost in a line with the moulding of the *adhishṭhāna*, this projection of about 2½ ft. cut out of the same rock suggests that the original rock-face at this end of the boulder should have been sloping as in the rest of the boulder to its south, but was split down vertically[2] in a line with the *adhishṭhāna* below and the *kapōta* above, leaving a central block from which the *sōpāna* has been cut.

The *sōpāna* is flanked on either side by *śuruḷyāḷi*-parapets, each shaped like a curved proboscis issuing from the mouth of a *vyāla* and ending below in an introvert curl. The *adhishṭhāna* itself consists of the *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda* and *kaṇṭha*, with the *paṭṭikā* on top. In the *kaṇṭha*-portion, there are two *kampas* one above and the other below. Corresponding to the pillars and pilasters above are blocks cut out at intervals as reliefs in the *kaṇṭha*-recess indicating the foundation-supports or downward extensions of the pillars as in built-up structures. The two pillars (pl. XXXVIII B) and two pilasters *in antis* are placed a little behind the edge of the *paṭṭikā* and have well-defined lotus-pedestals or *padma-pīṭhas* each, 2 ft. square. The lower portions of the pillars and pilasters are shaped in the form of sejant *vyālas* squatting on their haunches with their front legs planted straight; those of the two pillars face front and those of the pilasters face each other inwards. The

[1] Īśāna, Tatpurusha, Aghora, Vamadēva and Sadyōjāta. The second shrine from the north as well as the central one were definitely dedicated to forms of Śiva as indicated by the presence of a horned *dvāra-pāla* in the pair. If this was really so, the central shrine would have been appropriate to *Sadyōjāta* and the northern and southern end shrines to Īśāna and Tatpurusha respectively and the northern and southern recessed shrines to Vāmadēva and Aghōra.

[2] This again is another example at Mahābalipuram where the sloping rock was deliberately split down vertically and prepared for the excavation of a cave-temple. The fine-grained and compact rock at this end of the hill has, as could be seen in the adjoining blasted quarries, a tendency for a perfectly vertical cleavage.

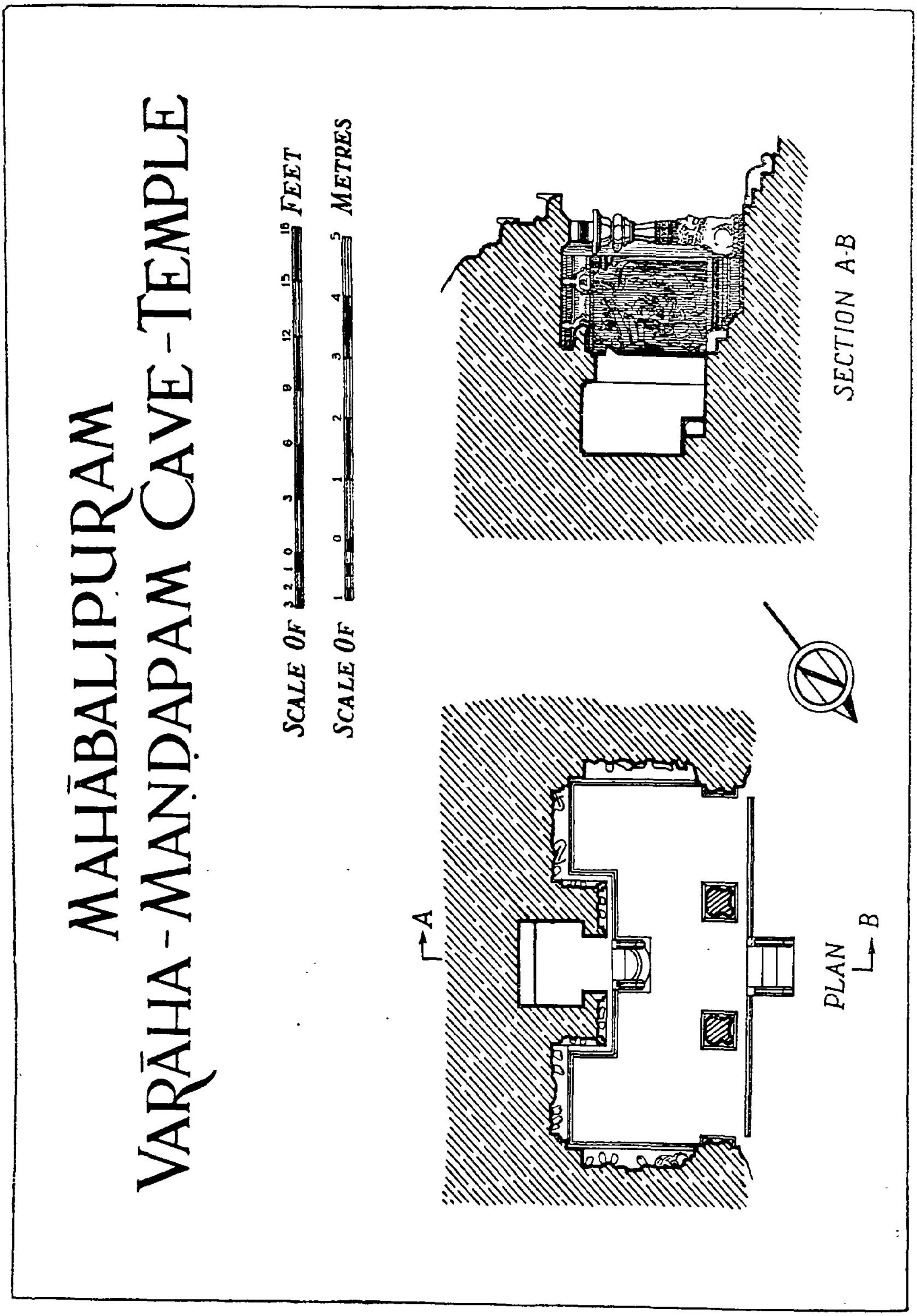
MAHĀBALIPURAM
VARĀHA-MAṆḌAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 29

height of these *vyālas* is about half the height of the column. From their heads spring the shafts or *kāl* of the pillars and pilasters. In the pillars the shaft is octagonal in section and is decorated immediately over the head of the *vyāla* by a broad *mālāsthāna* and *padma-bandha.* Beyond this come the usual capital-members, viz. *kalaśa, tāḍi, kaṇṭha, kumbha* and *pāli,* all of octagonal section, as the short shaft below, while the large *phalaka* on top is square. Beyond the *phalaka,* the pillar projects as a square *vīra-kaṇṭha,* carrying corbels with curved profile and *taraṅga*-mouldings and without a median *paṭṭa.* In the case of the pilaster at either extreme the shafts rising above the *vyāla*-heads are tetragonal in section as also the rest of the capital-members including the *phalaka* and *vīra-kaṇṭha.* The corbel too is of the same type as the corbels over the pillars, almost equal in width to the *vīra-kaṇṭha.* The *uttira* is of the same width as the corbel and over the *uttira* is cut out a slightly wider plank (*vājana*) carrying the eaves-board (*valabhī*) which has got ogee-sides both inside and outside and is decorated by a very closely-arranged frieze of what appears to be a row of *haṁsas* alternating with foliage. Judging from the workmanship and compared with the *haṁsas* below the shrine inside *kapōta,* and in other places at Mahābalipuram, and, particularly in view of their crudity and shallow relief, one is led to think that these decorations were perhaps put in at a much later date, when the lotus- and *raṅgōli*-designs were also incised on the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* and covered with paint. Originally, it was perhaps a plain ogee.

Overhanging this and projecting well forward and coming a little in front of the vertical line projected from the *adhishṭhāna* is the curved *kapōta,* its outer curved face decorated by three pairs of *kūḍu*-arches, each pair coming over the *aṅkaṇa* or bay formed between pillars and pilasters. The *kūḍu*-arches do not contain the usual figures or heads, but very faint carvings of lotus-designs. The lower edge of the *kapōta* is marked off by a line and decorated by a series of small circular medallions.

Over the *kapōta* runs a *vyāḷavari*; but the *vyāḷas* are clearly cut out. Mounted over this *vyāḷavari* is a row or *hāra* of three *śālās,* each coming directly over the *aṅkaṇa* between the columns below and corresponding to each pair of *kūḍu*-arches of the *kapōta.* Connecting these three projecting *śālās* and running between them is what appears to be a covered passage with a similar wagon-topped coping or roof and two lateral openings in the form of *alpa-nāsikās*—narrow vertical openings, surmounted by the typical *kūḍu*-shaped arches. These intervening *hārāntara* portions, which are recessed between the three projecting *śālās* and extend beyond on either side to the end of the excavation, come directly over the corbels and are all of exactly the same length as the corbels below, the two extreme recesses having only one *alpa-nāsikā.* The *śālās* each have an *alpa-nāsikā* in front of them while over the ridge of their *śikharas* are two *stūpis,* placed between the two shovel-headed finials of their end *tōraṇas* or *mukhapaṭṭis.* The two intervening cloister (*hārāntara*) portions have each a single *kalaśa* placed between the finials of the two *alpa-nāsikās.* The two extreme extensions are devoid of any *stūpi.* That each *hārāntara* portion connecting the *śālās* is meant to be a sort of connecting passage from one *śālā* to another in an *āvaraṇa* or *hāra* of shrines forming a sort of a covered cloister is evident from the ends of the cross-beams (supporting the curved roof in the original constructions) visible below the coping-like top of these connecting portions. The coping-like top is really, therefore, a curved roof further emphasized by the finial on top. This arrangement, as in the Kōnēri-maṇḍapam Rāmānuja-maṇḍapa, etc., is the extension of the *hāra*-members usually from over the *prastara* of the main *vimāna* also along the edges of the roofs of the *maṇḍapa* in front as in the structural Vijayālaya-Chōḷīśvaram at Nārttāmalai, some of the Chāḷukyan temples, the Airāvatēśvara temple at Dārāsuram and, in a modified form, in the Vijayanagara temples. The entire *hāra* reaching almost the crest-line of the rock is cut back a little over the *kapōta* in consonance with the top curvature of the crest of the rock.

Longhurst[1] speaks of a rectangular tank in front of the Varāha-maṇḍapam as part of the original excavation and coeval with it. It is clear that it is a later structural addition of identically-moulded stones placed opposite the rock-cut *adhishṭhāna.* The top stone on the northern side has a pit and an incomplete circle, as if it were a socket for a *liṅga* or a post. The stone on the southern side, however, does not bear the socket and circle round it. The moulded stones show the *jagatī*, octagonal *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, etc., of almost identical measurements as in the rock-cut *adhishṭhāna* of the cave-temple. The moulded stones on the top tier in front of this pit do not also form a continuous line, since there is a break in front of the rock-cut *sōpāna* where two plain stones placed well-behind, over the *kumudavari*, form a sort of a stepping-stone. Evidently, there was a structural *maṇḍapa* added to the cave-temple. Thus, the rectangular ' tank ' and its three structural sides were not in the original plan of the excavator. The tank or pit thus enclosed between the rock-cut mouldings of the cave-temple plinth and structural mouldings of the later *maṇḍapa* plinth is provided with an outlet near its north-west corner for draining away rain-water. It clearly shows that the intention of the people who put up the structural *maṇḍapa* was to avoid burying the rock-cut *sōpāna*- and *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings on either side in front of the original rock-cut *maṇḍapa* and to keep the roof of the added *maṇḍapa* clear of the moulded *kapōta* of the cave-temple.

The rock-cut *maṇḍapa* has on its rear wall a square shrine (pl. XXXIX B) cut out very prominently and projecting out to a distance of 4 ft. in front of the general wall-surface. Starting from the pilaster at one end of the *maṇḍapa*-façade and extending right round along the lateral walls and the rear wall of the *maṇḍapa* and continued over the base of the projecting shrine is a moulded *adhishṭhāna* complete in all its parts, *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, *kaṇṭha* with two *kampas* and *paṭṭikā* or *prati.* Leading down from the centre of the projecting shrine and equal to the width of the shrine opening is a flight of two steps guarded by *śurulyāḷis* on either side, the upper step oblong and the lower step more of the shape of a *padma-pīṭha* than that of a *chandra-śilā.* The whole *sōpāna* has been cut out of an oblong block of the rock in front of the projecting shrine and a portion of it is retained at the base of the steps as a dressed platform, in a level with the *upāna*-moulding of the *adhishṭhāna.*

The projecting shrine is a model of an 8-ft.-side *vimāna* as measured between the bases of the two extreme cantoning pilasters and is thrust out to about half its width, i.e. 4 ft., from the general wall-surface of the *maṇḍapa* on either side. The front-wall of the shrine has four pilasters, the inner two flanking the oblong shrine-entrance in the centre above the steps, while the other two have almost the form of full pillars cantoning the two front corners. In between the pillar and pilaster on each side is sunk a rather deep niche with a *dvāra-pāla* sculpture in semi-profile. Similarly, the two side walls of the shrine visible as projecting from the back wall of the *maṇḍapa* have a pilaster each at the inner corner and the space between it and the cantoning pilaster of that side forms a niche to accommodate a *dvāra-pāla* sculpture. This would indicate that this is a rock-cut model (monolithic in effect) of a shrine with two pairs of pilasters on each of its side walls and three intervening niches on each side, except the front side where in the place of a central niche, there is a shrine-entrance. Alternatively, the central parts of the other three sides might have been open as in *chaturmukha* temples or might have been false doors or *ghana-dvāras.* All the six pilasters thus visible on the front and sides of the shrine are of uniform tetragonal type. One feature which is not quite common elsewhere is that these pilasters like the *vyāla*-pillars in front have been provided with *ōma* plinths or *pīṭhas.* They are of the

[1] Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. II, p. 30.

type of *padma-pīṭhas* as in the case of pillars in the façade and slightly wider all round. The shaft or *kāl* of the pilasters are adorned at the middle of their height by a *madhya-bandha* band, while again at the top is a second band, the *padma-bandha* demarcating the shaft from the capital-members above, viz., *kalaśa, tāḍi, kanṭha, kumbha, padma* and *phalaka*. Above the *phalaka* the pilaster extends in the form of a short *vīrakanṭha* carrying the *taraṅga*-corbels which have curved profiles. The beam of each side is of equal width as the corbels, crossed over each other as if on scarf-joints and projecting beyond their point of intersection over the projecting arms of the cross-corbels placed on top of the corner pilasters. Over each beam run the upper planks (*vājana* with *valabhī*) adorned by a frieze of *bhūta-gaṇas*, ten in number on the front side of the shrine, and by a row of *haṁsas*, three in number on each of the two sides, all representing the decorated front ends of joists. Above these *bhūta-* and *haṁsa*-friezes, projects the curved cornice or *kapōta* decorated in front by two *kūḍu*-arches coming almost above the *dvāra-pāla* niches below. The two corners of the *kapōta* are adorned by boldly embossed scroll-work representing the *kōṇapaṭṭa*, and the *kūḍus* have shovel finials above and human heads inside. The *kapōta* corners are further supported by two rampant *vyālas* springing from the tops of the *phalaka* of the cantoning pillars and butting their heads against the *kapōta*. The edge of the overhanging *kapōta*, which is well-scooped under, is marked off into a brim by a chisel line, thereby suggesting that in contemporary original structures, the *kapōta* was of curved metal sheeting with embossed designs and bracings fixed over a bent wooden framework. Over the *kapōta* runs a *vyāḷavari* with projecting *makara* head at either end.

The back wall of the *maṇḍapa* on either side of the projecting central shrine as also the side walls, are cut into deep niches flanked at their extremities by pilasters identical with those of the projecting central shrine and rising from the top of the moulded *adhishṭhāna*. Over the corbels of the pilasters, which are also of the *taraṅga* type with curved profile, runs the beam or *uttira* continuous with the same members of the projecting central shrine. This *taraṅga*- moulding is found in all the corbels except in the case of the one at the south-east corner of the *maṇḍapa* over the pilaster to the south of Durgā. Thus, these pilasters on the back and end walls of the *maṇḍapa* enclose large rectangular niches, which are filled with fine group sculptures. Over the beam on top of these niches runs a *haṁsavari* (*haṁsa-mālā*) with an overhanging *kapōta* on top adorned by *kūḍu*-arches similar to and in a line with the *kapōta* of the central shrine. Above this and running between the *kapōta* and the flat ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* is a *vyāḷavari* with the *vyālas* rather distantly and irregularly spaced. These represent the carved projected ends of the joists of the terrace-floor, held in position behind their ends by scarfed transverse beams on the four sides, their projections beyond the corners carved as *makara*-heads. The beam (*āliṅga-paṭṭi*)connecting up the *vyāḷavari*, is rendered visible as a continuous course behind the shovel-head finials of the *kūḍus* which reach up to the ceiling.

The shrine-entrance is not framed by jambs sill and lintel but is cut straight between the two pilasters up to the level of the beam. The cell inside is oblong with a rock-cut oblong platform at the hind wall, which probably formed the pedestal of the main deity or deities which were loose wooden carvings installed there, or perhaps were of stucco, now absent. The *dvāra-pālas* flanking the entrance on either side are almost identical, stately in bearing and wearing *yajñōpavītas* in the normal fashion. The northern *dvāra-pāla* points to the shrine by the *sūchi* pose of his inner hand, with his outer or right hand in *kaṭyavalambita*. The southern *dvāra-pāla* has his right hand in *vismaya* or adoration almost pointing to the shrine, while the left is in similar *kaṭi* pose. The two figures looking like *dvāra-pālas* on the two lateral walls of the shrine are, however, not quite similar. The southern one stands in *tribhaṅga* with both his hands in *kaṭi*. He wears a *yajñōpavīta* in the

normal fashion and a *jaṭā-makuṭa*. The figure on the north stands almost in *tribhaṅga* with his legs apart, his right hand in *abhaya* while his left is in *kaṭi*. He wears an ordinary *makuṭa*.

Carved in the northern end panel of the *maṇḍapa* is the group of Varāha uplifting Pṛithvī from *pātāla*, while on the southern end wall opposite to it is the figure of Trivikrama with raised left foot depicting the scene of the discomfiture of Bali. In the niche on the back wall of the *maṇḍapa* to the north of the central shrine is a fine Gaja-Lakshmī group, while in the southern niche is the figure of Durgā.

In the Varāha panel (pl. XLI), the grouping and the depiction of individual forms appears to follow the iconography more of the *Vaikhānasāgama* than other texts like *Śilpa-ratna*, *Agni-purāṇa* or *Vishṇu-dharmōttara*.[1] The main figure of Vishṇu as Varāha is Bhū-Varāha or Ādi-Varāha, also called Nṛi-Varāha or the man-boar incarnation of Vishṇu. The most remarkable feature of this zoo-anthropomorphic form is the perfection and tilt of the snout of the boar and its imperceptible and natural merging with the human neck below, which is achieved only in the similar zoo-anthropomorphic form of Mahishāsura in the Mahishamardinī cave, a feature not found elsewhere. Vishṇu has four arms, two of which hold *chakra* (right) and *śaṅkha* (left), and of the two other arms, the right is thrown round the *nitamba* below the hip of *Bhū-dēvi*, seated on the god's uplifted and bent right knee (*ūrdhva-jānu*), while by the left he holds her right leg. His own right leg is placed on the serpent hood of the crouching Śēsha-nāga below, while his left leg is straight and firmly planted on the ground below, the stance suggesting that he is about to jump up from the nether regions, in which act he is to hold up Bhū-dēvi in position. That the crouching figure below is Śēsha-nāga is not only suggested by the five-headed serpent hood over his human head, but also from the fact that he is emerging from water indicated by the lotus-leaves, flowers and ripples hiding the lower portions of his body. The snout of the boar is, in accordance with the text, slightly tilted ups niffing the bosom of Bhū-dēvī and almost touching her breasts, the loosened *kucha-bandha* round which having been shown fallen down over her right thigh and behind her hip. As stated in the *Vaikhānasa* text, her face is expressive of both shyness and joy. Her two hands are closed up in shyness below the snout of Varāha. The Varāha form is shown in semi-profile facing proper right. Behind him to his left is Brahmā with three heads (three of four visible in front, the fourth behind not shown in a bas-relief) standing in *tribhaṅga*, his height reaching the height of the shoulders of the main figure. Of his three faces, that on the right side has been badly broken while the front and left faces are still intact. He wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa*. His *uttarīya* or *ājina* is in *yajñōpavīta*-fashion. The two right hands are in *kaṭaka* and *kaṭyava-lambita* respectively, while the two left are hanging down, one in *vismaya* and the other carrying what is described as a *kamaṇḍalu* by Gopinatha Rao, more probably the *ājya-pātra* and in the other what appears to be a *śruk* (ladle) judging from its size and long handle. Behind him comes a sage-like figure carrying a *vīṇā*, perhaps Nārada, as identified by Gopinatha Rao. Over Brahmā and Nārada and at the top corner is a flying form of Chandra shown as if emerging from the clouds with his hands in *añjali*. In front of Varāha and the crouching Śēsha-nāga, below his right leg, stands another lady bowing and with hands in *añjali*. Her ornament and dress are not identical with those of Bhū-dēvī, who is sitting on the right knee of Varāha, but like Śēsha-nāga she is also shown as emerging from amidst lotus-leaves, flowers and ripples. In fact, the parts below her left knee and her right foot are not visible. It would not, therefore, be quite correct to identify

[1] Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 1, pt. i; pp. 132-34 and 137-40; also *Vaikhānasāgama*, *Paṭala* 56.

her with Bhū-dēvī supplicating before Varāha as a prelude to his lifting her up, but it will be more appropriate to call her the consort of Śēsha-nāga, as according to the *Vaikhānasāgama* Śēsha-nāga in such a composition should always be shown in company with his spouse. While Gopinatha Rao makes this statement earlier, he fails to identify her so, but surmises that she may be *Bhū-dēvī*. The figure standing behind the *nāga* would appear to be more a *ṛishi* than Śiva. Gopinatha Rao himself is doubtful whether to call him a *ṛishi* or Śiva because, as Śiva he cannot be shown as bowing down and in *añjali*. Further, corresponding to Brahmā on the other side he is not four-armed. Over the two figures at the top corner again, and corresponding to Chandra, is Sūrya, also emerging from the clouds with his hands in *añjali* and with a circular *prabhā-maṇḍala* behind his head. The vertical object which Longhurst calls a cornucopia[1] and Gopinatha Rao a *vīṇā* as placed in front of this *ṛishi*-like figure and below Sūrya is perhaps the uplifted tail of Śēsha-nāga quite similar to the depiction of Kāḷiya in the Kāḷiya-mardana panel in the Dharmarāja-ratha.

In the Gaja-Lakshmī panel (pl. XLII), Lakshmī as Śrī-dēvī is seated (*pralamba*)on a full-blown lotus, her two legs resting on a spread-out lotus-leaf below. The other lotus-leaves shown vertically with their stalks behind suggest the lotus tank. Lakshmī is two-armed, her two hands held up symmetrically in *kaṭaka* as if to hold lotuses. A *svarṇa-vaikāksha* crosses her bosom in front and she wears enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas*. Her head-dress is the one peculiar to Pallava and contemporary sculptures of the South, looking like a *ja ā-bandha* with a conical peak. On either side of her stand four celestial nymphs diaphanously clothed, the two nearest to her leading and carrying water pitchers in the palm of one of their hands, while the other is placed in *kaṭi*. The two other nymphs follow holding on to the leading water carrier by the girdle or plaited tresses. The other hand in each case is held in *kaṭaka*. Over them are shown the heads of two elephants; that on the proper right shows its broad side while the one on the proper left is in profile. The elephant on the right of Lakshmī is holding up by its trunk and inverting a water-pitcher over the head of Lakshmī. The elephant on the left is coiling its trunk round the water-pitcher held by the nymph below as if in the act of lifting it up.

In the Trivikrama panel (pl. XLIV), the composition as also the iconography of Trivikrama appears to follow more closely the *Vaikhānasāgama* than the *Śilpa-ratna* and *Vishṇu-dharmōttara* texts.[2] This will be clear from the fact that Trivikrama is shown as standing with his right leg firmly planted on the ground and left raised above the level of his forehead. This shows that Trivikrama has already paced twice transcending in his measures the bounds of the earth and beyond, including *svarga-lōka*. (It is said that up to the knee of Trivikrama is *bhū-lōka*, above it up to the navel is *antariksha* and above it up to the forehead is *svarga*.) He is eight-armed and in accordance with the text, three of his right hands carry the *chakra*, *gadā* and *khaḍga*, while the fourth is held up with the palm turned up as required in the *Vaikhānasāgama*. Three of his left hands carry *śaṅkha*, *kēṭaka* and *śārṅga* (or *dhanus*) and the fourth left hand is stretched straight towards his uplifted leg, the fore-finger pointing beyond the foot, again in conformity with the same text. Near his uplifted foot is shown Brahmā, four-armed, seated on a *padmāsana* offering *pūjā* by washing the raised foot of Vishṇu. He wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa* and *karṇa-kuṇḍalas*. In the corresponding position at the other end of the panel, to the right of Trivikrama, is four-armed Śiva, also seated on a *padmāsana*, one of the arms being held in the attitude of praise. He also wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa* and *kuṇḍalas*. Both Śiva and Brahmā are shown at the level

[1] Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, pt. II, p. 31.
[2] Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 161 ff., also *Vaikhānasāgama*, *Paṭala* 58.

of the forehead of Trivikrama indicating their position in *svarga*. Between Trivikrama's head and Brahmā on the left, shown in the attitude of flying in the sky is Jāmbavān with a bear's face beating on the *bhērī* (drum) with his right hand, and the left held out in adoration. On either side of Trivikrama at the level of his navel (indicating the sky region) are shown Sūrya and Chandra in the posture of flight, two-armed, one of them stretched in adoration, and with circular *prabhā-maṇḍalas* round their heads. Sūrya comes below Śiva and Chandra below Brahmā. The sky-region is also indicated by a figure shown as falling down in mid-air, perhaps Triśaṅku, who belonged neither to earth nor to heaven. Taking the whole context in question, it is more appropriate to identify the falling figure as Triśaṅku, as his position is indicated in a level with Sūrya, Chandra and the navel of Trivikrama. Gopinatha Rao doubts whether it could be one of the *dānavas*, who were hurled up into the air as if by a hurricane when Vishṇu assumed his *viśva-rūpa* in accordance with the tradition of *Brahmāṇḍa-purāṇa*.

The depiction of Bhū-Varāha and Trivikrama by great kings of earlier dynasties (the Gupta, Chāḷukya etc.) has been a favourite theme representing their prowess, as conquerors (euphemistically of the three worlds) symbolized by Trivikrama's strides and discomfiture of Bali, who was a *chakravartin*, and as restorers of the kingdoms (*dharma* and *pṛithvī*) symbolized by Bhū-Varāha. Māmalla too actuated by the same *chakravartin* concept adopted the same tradition in his choice of the sculptures here and perhaps excelled his predecessors in the depiction. Characteristically enough by the side of the Varāha panel is Śrīdēvi symbolic of *Rājya-śrī* and prosperity while by the side of the Trivikrama panel is shown Durgā the goddess of victory or *Vijaya-śrī*. Probably all these were after Māmalla's conquest of Bādāmi and therefore late in his reign.

The Durgā in the adjoining panel (pl. XLIII), though of fine form and graceful lines, falls a bit below the mark because of the stiffness suggested by her erect or *sama-bhaṅga* posture. She stands four-armed on a *padma-pīṭha*, (unlike the Durgā of the Trimurti Cave, who stands on a buffaloe-head) the lower right hand is in *abhaya* and left in *kaṭi*, while the upper arms hold the *chakra* and *śaṅkha*. She wears a girdle-cloth as a *kaṭi-vastra* over her thin nether garment, a *kucha-bandha* round her breasts, a *kirīṭa-makuṭa* on the head and *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears. Emerging from behind her head, and coming above it is a parasol. Kneeling on her right is a devotee offering his own head, held up by the tuft with his left hand, while with the right hand he is hacking it off with a long sword placed at the neck. On the left is another devotee seated on his knees in adoration. On either side of Durgā are four dwarf *gaṇas* with pot-bellies shown in the attitude of flight. On top to the proper right of the parasol is the head of a rearing lion emerging from the background while on the left emerge the head and neck of an antelope. Such an association of lion and antelope with Durgā, typical of the south, is also found in the almost identical panel in the Ādi-Varāha cave-temple and near the Shore temple, where the little form of Durgā is enshrined in a niche cut into the chest of a squatting lion, while below, cut on the rock lies her antelope in the characteristic sleeping attitude of bovines and caprids, the neck worn out and which has led some to think that it had been killed and others to suggest its identification as Mahisha.

Since none of the *dvāra-pālas* has the characteristic horn or club as is invariably found in the case of the *dvāra-pālas* of Śiva shrines and from the presence of the other sculptures such as Bhū-Varāha, Trivikrama, Śrī Dēvī and Durgā in the *maṇḍapa* of this Māmalla cave-temple, it may be inferred that the shrine was consecrated to Vishṇu, perhaps as Narasiṁha.

Mahābalipuram: Mahishamardinī-maṇḍapam cave-temple (fig. 30; pls. XLV-XLVIII)

This cave, an excavation on the eastern scarp of a boulder on the top of the hill at

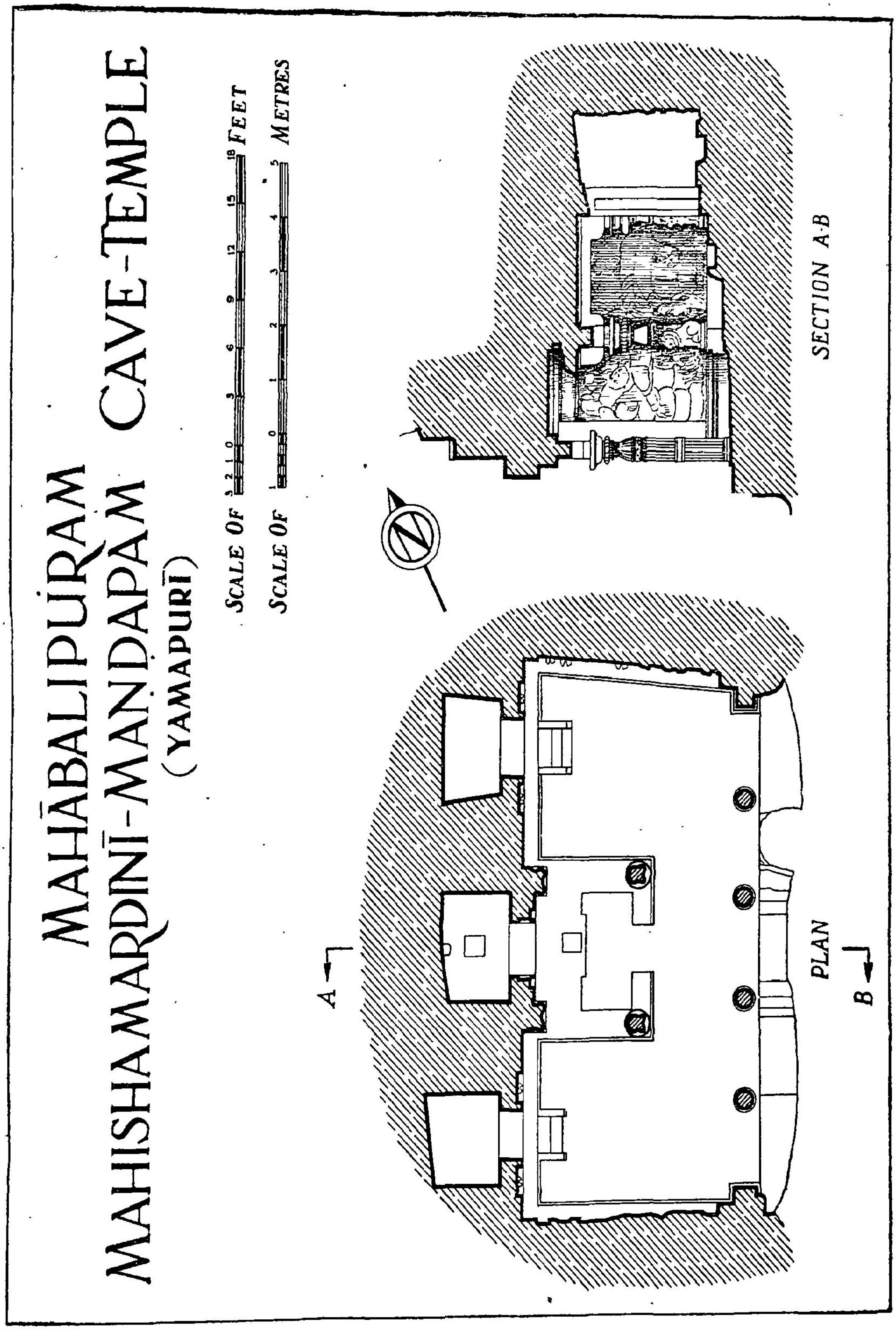
MAHĀBALIPURAM
MAHISHAMARDINĪ-MANDAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
(YAMAPURĪ)
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 30

Mahābalipuram, practically at its southern end and very near the light house, is locally called Yamapuri. On top of the same boulder is the ruined Pallava structural temple Olakkaṇṇēśvara, the top of which formed the light house before the present one was built.

Since the scarp of the rock was almost vertical, no deep cutting of the surface was made as preliminary preparation for the excavation. The excavation was started straight into the rock at a height of about 5 ft. from ground-level, which has been cut off and quarried at a later stage as the blast-holes in front indicate. Further, the quarry at the base below the façade-line is of shorter length than the façade, leaving a cubical mass of rock at the southern end and showing that it was not contemporary with the original cutting. However, while so removing the projected rock-platform, a small chunk in front has been left at the middle as a remnant of the *sōpāna*, which in its complete form would have consisted of two flights of small steps ascending laterally to a small platform or landing in front of the cave temple and protected by a frontal parapet. As such, the basement mouldings, if there were any, are now absent. The façade (pl. XLV) is recessed to a depth of about 1½ ft. from the general surface of the rock leaving a ledge of about 1 ft. on top to form the cornice. Above this cornice line are roughly-shaped *kūḍus* and above them are a series of oblong blocks cut out in order to be finished into a *hāra* of five *śālās*, with the intervening short recesses (*hārāntara*) to form the connecting cloister. Along with the roughly shaped *kūḍus*, the general curvature of the *kapōta* has also been roughly worked out. On the façade, between the basement and the cornice and recessed a little inside, is cut a row of four pillars and two pilasters forming the front of an oblong *maṇḍapa*. Of the four pillars, one has been totally removed leaving only the bracket hanging down from the beam. The lost pillar is now replaced by a plain cut-stone column. This is the second pillar from the south. Similarly, its counterpart, the second from the north, is also damaged at the top where its entire *phalaka* (abacus) has been removed. This is perhaps an indication of an attempt by the later Vaishṇava occupants to cut away this pillar also, so as to form a wide central gap as wide as the shrine behind. The pillar that has been removed from this cave-temple is now found in the modern *maṇḍapa* of the Ādi-Varāha temple further down and behind this cave-temple. The façade is thus divided into five bays and on the cornice-line there are designs for a pair of *kūḍu*-arches over each bay and above this rough *prastara* are blocked out the forms of a *hāra* of five *śālās*. Thus, the total number of *kūḍus* according to the original plan was ten, while that of the *sālās* was five. This is the only instance of a cave-temple where, contrary to the general practice, the excavation and completion of the interior was taken up for finish before the completion of the façade details.

Among the pillars and pilasters, the southernmost pilaster and pillar are practically finished from base to top. The pilasters, one at either extreme, are tetragonal throughout having a broad floral band about the middle of the height of their shafts (*madhya-bandha*), the top of the shaft again marked off by a more elaborate *padma-bandha*, which consists of a row of lotus-petals on the top line, a broad belt of foliage between two rows of beads, forming a central band and garlands and tassels hanging down in loops below (the *mālā-sthāna*). The capital is complete in all respects in having the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, *kumbha*, *padma*, *phalaka* and *vīra-kaṇṭha*. The width of the pilaster is 13½ in. Unlike the pilasters, the pillars are of the circular type, fluted into sixteen facets, each like a split bamboo (*śuṇḍōbhēda*). While the pilasters are mounted on short square plinths (*ōma*) of greater sides, the pillars are mounted on circular plinths of a greater diameter, the general diameter of the pillar being equal to the side of the pilaster, viz., 13½ in. The *ōma* of the pillar at its bottom, as seen in the southernmost complete pillar, is a kind of *bhadra-pīṭha* with three

mouldings, the lower broader and the upper two of the same diameter forming bead-like mouldings (*kampa*). As in the pilasters, each pillar has a decorative *madhya-bandha* band at about the middle height of the shaft which is visible in the northernmost pillar. Incidentally the northernmost and the southernmost pillars supply between them all the details of the original design. It consists of two rows of petals one above, and another below, with a central band of oblong and circular medallions, a *phalaka* garland bordered by two rows of beads as described in the pilasters. On top of the shaft is the *padma-bandha* and *mālā-sthāna* identical with that of the pilaster. The *kalaśa, tāḍi, kaṇṭha, kumbha* and *padma* of the capital above the *kāl* have the same section (sixteen-sided polygon) while the abacus or *phalaka* is square as it should be. The plinth at the base, as seen in the southernmost pillar, is, however, circular and not sixteen-sided. On top of each pillar, the *vīra-kaṇṭha*, in accordance with the norm prescribed by *Śilpa*-works, has a square section, carrying above it the corbel with a definite curved profile and without the *taraṅga*-ornamentation, which perhaps was never intended to be done. Over the corbels runs the *uttira* of the same height as the corbel. The length of the corbel is double the width of the *phalaka*, whereas its width is the same as the width of the *uttira* above and the width of the pilaster or the diameter of the pillar. The mouldings above the *uttira* have been left incomplete.

The floor and the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* behind this façade are likewise unfinished. At a height of 3½ ft. above the floor-level of this *maṇḍapa*, cut into the back wall, are three shrine-cells, the central larger with a projecting platform in front carrying a monolithic pillared porch, as in the Mahēndra-type cave-temple at Daḷavāṇūr, its platform being 2½ ft. high from the ground-level of the outer *maṇḍapa* and 1 ft. lower than the floor of the central shrine behind. It is an *adhishṭhāna* complete with mouldings. The same *adhishṭhāna* with similar mouldings extends in front of the lateral shrines as a projection (about 1½ ft.) from the shrine-fronts further extending along the side walls of the large *maṇḍapa* also. The *adhishṭhāna* is more complete below the southern end wall of the *maṇḍapa*, the southern shrine and in the porch portion extending up to the steps of the northern shrine, though damaged here and there. It consists of the *jagatī*, a *tripaṭṭa-kumuda, kaṇṭha* and a projecting *paṭṭikā*. In front of the *adhishṭhāna*, below the two lateral shrines, are incomplete *sōpānas*, the southern one comparatively more complete than the northern one in having three oblong steps, flanked by two *śuruḷyāḷi* parapets. The parapets of the incomplete northern *sopāna* have also subsequently been damaged. The floor-levels of the two lateral shrines are about a foot higher than that of the central shrine.

The projecting *adhishṭhāna* of the monolithic pillared porch in front of the central shrine measures 9½ ft. at the sides (as measured from the back wall of the *maṇḍapa*) and 10½ ft. in front north-south. On top of this *adhishṭhāna* are two lion-based pillars with circular shafts, in the front line and two *yāḷi*-based tetragonal pilasters in the rear line addorsed to the projecting front wall of the central shrine. The platform or floor of this *antarāla* has been cut into a deep oblong pit at a later stage, with a square socket behind. The idea of the later Vaishṇavites, who occupied this cave-temple, was to use the porch as a main shrine for a Vishṇu idol after blocking off the doorway of the shrine-cell behind, because it contains a bas-relief of Śiva which was not wanted. In evidence of such occupation and use they have left their marks of *śaṅkha* and *chakra* inscribed on the two side pilasters of the *maṇḍapa*-façade. The two pillars in the front row of the porch have sejant lions sitting on their haunches with forelegs erect on circular plinths of greater diameter than the pillar shaft. From the heads of these lions spring the apices of the shafts, circular in section and decorated by the *mālā-sthāna* and *padma-bandha*. As such, while the height of the lion would correspond to the major height of the shaft, the *padma-bandha* marks its apex. The *padma-bandha* is marked off by a series of lotus petals on top, and below it, between two

narrow bands of bead work, a broad band of foliage (*koḍikkarukku*) in scrolls. From the lower bead line hangs a number of loops and tassels alternating. It is to be noted here that the animals supporting the pillars are representations of lions and not *vyālas* as in the other cave-temples, for they do not have the cornuate projections from their foreheads. This cave-temple, furthermore, differs from others in that the pillars and pilasters of the façade as well as those of the porch in front of the central shrine are complete in having an abacus or *phalaka* on top of their capitals. These façade-pillars, without the lion or *vyāḷa* bases, are in contrast with those in the earlier Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam, where such pillars are found in the second row (the façade itself having Mahēndra pillars) and where the *phalaka* is absent.[1] There are both lion - and *vyāla*-based pillars, in addition, in this cave-temple. Above the *padma-bandha* of the lion pillars and *vyāla* pillars and pilasters the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kumbha* and *padma* are not quite circular in section, but are sixteen-sided in conformity with the similar members of pillars of the façade, their dimensions being slightly lesser. Of the two lions in the front row, the one on the north is more complete with the curls on its mane well-depicted, while that on the south is incomplete in that respect. The corbels on top placed on the *vīra-kaṇṭha* of the two pillars are similar to those of the façade, curved in profile and without the *taraṅga*-mouldings. These are cross- or compound-corbels carrying the cross-beams or *uttiras* which are scarfed over them, their ends projecting beyond and over the outer corbel-arms. These beams are of the same width as the corbels but are of a slightly lesser height. In the pilasters, however, the animals at their bases, sejant on squared plinths, are more *vyālas* than lions. They have three horn-like projections from their foreheads, the two diverging lateral horns holding the bulging eye-sockets at their bases, while the central one is an upward extension of the ridge of the nose. The mane is better finished in the northern *vyāla* than in the southern one. Rising immediately over the head of these *vyālas* are the *mālās* and *padma-bandhas* resembling those of the two front lion-pillars. Over the *padma-bandhas* come the usual capital-members—*kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, *kumbha*, *padma*, *phalaka* and *vīra-kaṇṭha* with the *pōtikā*-arm projecting in front to support the inner end of the beam of that side.

Over the beams is placed the thin *vājana* of a slightly greater width supporting the ceiling and the *kapōta* all round. The *kapōta* is as usual flexed with two *kūḍu*-arches for each of the three sides, all the six incomplete. Springing from the tops of the two front *phalakas* at their outer corners were intended to be cut rampant lions rearing up and butting against the base of the *kapōta* as if supporting it: this is evident from the rough bits of original rock still left between the outer arms of the cross-corbels. Over the *kapōta* there is an indistinctly-carved *vyāḷavari*. Like the *adhishṭhāna*, this *kapota* is extended on either side over the two lateral shrine fronts and, beyond, over the two end walls of the main *maṇḍapa*. As in the *adhishṭhāna* below, the *kapōta* on top is more complete over the southern end wall, where the two *kūḍus* are completed including two *vyāla*-faces in the *vyāḷavari* above. Over the southern shrine the *haṁsavari* below the *kapōta*, with twelve *haṁsas* in a row, is more or less completed, as also the *kūḍus* of the *kapōta* and the *vayāḷavari* above. The *kapōta* over the northern shrine and the members below and above are incomplete, while over the northern end wall of the *maṇḍapa*, the *kapōta* shows two almost-finished *kūḍus* and two *vyālas* in the *vyāḷavari* above. All the *kūḍus* thus finished are of the usual Pallava type with shovel-finials and central human heads. All this would show that the work of giving the final touches proceeded from south.

[1] The Mahishamardinī-maṇḍapam marks the next step in the evolution from the Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam, which has Mahēndra pillars on the façade and pillars with capitals and without lion bases inside. The latter became the façade of the Mahishamardinī cave, with the inner pillars, lion- or *vyāla*-based, forming the next step in the transformation.

Placed inside the two pilasters of the portico and on either side of the central shrine-entrances are double-armed *dvāra-pālas* in shallow niches in semi-profile. The one on the south rests his left elbow on the top of his upright *gadā* or club planted in front of him, while out-stretched fore and little fingers of the same hand point towards the shrine. His right hand is in *kaṭi* and the *yajñōpavīta* is in the *nīvīta*-fashion. He has two horns on either side of his head behind. His counterpart on the north shows the same *mudrā* by his right hand, while his left hand rests on the top of the club placed beside him. His *yajñōpavīta* is also in the *nīvīta*-fashion. There are three serpents rising from his left shoulder over his left ear, but no horns as in the other. This set of *dvāra-pālas* with clubs resembles in general the pair guarding the recessed shrine to the south of the central shrine in Kōṉērī-maṇḍapam. The shrine-entrance is devoid of jamb, sill, lintel and even the flanking pilasters found elsewhere in place of the jambs.

The shrine-chamber is oblong and on its back wall, filling it totally, is a large bas-relief of a unique form of the Sōmāskanda group seated on a *simhāsana* (pl. XLVI). Śiva is four-armed, the upper right holding what appears to be a roll of cloth (*parivaṭṭam*), the upper left a rosary, the lower right in *kaṭaka* and the lower left placed on his lap, palm upwards. Śiva is in the *sukhāsana* pose. Pārvatī is two-armed with the tiny Skanda sitting on her right lap. While her left hand is resting on the top of the seat, her right hand is gently holding Skanda from behind. The pendent legs of Śiva and Pārvatī are placed on the back of the recumbent *vṛishabha* below. Behind the *vṛishabha* and seated below the *simhāsana* is a devotee with his hands in adoration. If what Śiva holds in his upper right hand is a *parivaṭṭam* or garland, this devotee may perhaps be identified with Chaṇḍi-kēśvara. It is to be noted here that this is the only Sōmāskanda group which shows a Nandī and in addition a devotee below. In the light of this identification, this relief, like the one on the Dharmarāja-ratha, would form the earliest representation of Śiva as Chaṇ-ḍēśānugraha-mūrti. Standing behind Śiva is Brahmā on the south, four-armed and four-headed. He is holding a *kalaśa* in the upper right hand and *aksha-mālā* in the upper left. The lower right is in adoration and the lower left perhaps in *kaṭaka* as if holding a flower towards Śiva. Vishṇu on the north is also four-armed, holding *prayōga-chakra* in the upper right hand, *śaṅkha* in the upper left, the lower right is in *kaṭaka* and the lower left in adoration. On the top between the heads of Brahmā and Śiva is shown Sūrya (not found in other Sōmāskanda panels), while a little to his side is seen the stem and parts of the usual parasol.

On the floor, in front of the Chaṇḍēśā-nugraha-mūrti is cut a circular socket with surrounding circular grooves as if to accommodate a detached *liṅga* and its *āvuḍaiyār*, which appear to have been later installations. At the time when the shrine-cell was cut, Śiva appears to have been worshipped in his *sakala* form, e.g., Sōmāskanda, even as Vishṇu, Brahmā, Durgā, etc., were installed in central shrines in the form of paintings or stucco or wooden reliefs, which were prevalent till the times of Paramēśvara, when relief images (or *sakala liṅgas*) in stone came into vogue.

The entrance of the southern shrine is also devoid of jambs and lintels or even flanking pilasters. On either side of the rough-cut entrance are two two-armed *dvāra-pālas* in semi-profile, the one on the south of the usual type, his legs crossed, left hand resting on a massive club and right placed in *kaṭi*. Peculiarly, this *dvāra-pāla* alone has the curved bull's horns on either side of his crown, as one of the two *dvāra-pālas* guarding the recessed shrine to the north of the central shrine in the Kōṉērī-maṇḍapam. His *yajñōpavīta* is worn in the *nīvīta*-fashion. The *dvāra-pāla* on the north has no club but stands facing the shrine with his right hand in *kaṭaka* and left in *kaṭi*; over his right shoulder is the hood of a little

serpent. The shrine-cell is empty except for a very shallow circular socket, which is a later addition.

The entrance to northern shrine resembles that to the southern shrine in having no jambs, lintel or flanking pilasters. The two *dvāra-pālas* on either side of this shrine in front are identical in all respects with each other but differ from the two other pairs of the other two shrines. They wear their *vastras* with a central fold down to the ankles (not down to the thighs as the other ones). The southern *dvāra-pāla* holds a flower in his left hand pointing towards the shrine, while his right hand is in *kaṭi*. The order is reversed in the case of his northern counterpart. Both of them are in semi-profile with their left and right feet turned towards the shrine, as if walking into it and in general resemble the *dvāra-pālas* guarding the central shrine in the Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam. No *yajñōpavīta* is evident in either case. The shrine is empty and there is not even a faint trace of any socket on the floor, but at the base of the back wall are three rough cubical projecting blocks not cut out. Evidently, they were to form the pedestals of three deities placed in a line.[1]

Sculpture seems to have had precedence over architecture in this cave-temple. Occupying the whole of the northern end wall of the *maṇḍapa* and filling the space between the *adhishṭhāna* below and *uttira* above and the two rough-cut pilasters with curved corbels on either side is a large and finished panel showing the excellent grouping of Durgā as Mahishamardinī fighting Mahishāsura—a sculpture remarkable for its beauty, grace and virility (pl. XLVII). Durgā is eight-armed riding astride a lion, holding the bow with her out-stretched lower left hand, while her lower right is bent behind her ears as if drawing the taut bow-string to the full; the bow-string and arrow, however, not being depicted. The three other right hands hold a *khaḍga, ghaṇṭā* and *chakra* and the three other left hands hold a dagger, *pāśa* and *śaṅkha.* While the front pair of hands are shown as engaged in shooting with the bow, the pair of hands just behind are shown as if thrusting and stabbing simultaneously with sword and dagger. Below Durgā, kneeling down, is one of her *yōginīs* (Jayā) also striking with a sword, as graceful and as powerful as Durgā herself. Below the darting lion is another *gaṇa* holding shield and sword. Three other *gaṇas* likewise, behind and above Durgā, hold or fight with shield and sword, while two more hold a parasol and *chāmara* respectively for Durgā. The eighth *gaṇa* is flying, carrying offerings in a plate. Mahishāsura is depicted in an equally powerful pose wielding defiantly a club in his two hands. The merging of the buffalo-head with the human trunk is marvellous as also the depiction of his body-line from the tip of the crown between the horns through the snout down to the straight right leg suggesting firmness and defiance. Such a delineation of Mahishāsura is remarkable. While wielding the club, he has a long sword struck to his belt behind. One of his retinue holds a parasol over him suggesting him to be a *chakravartin*, another is fighting with one of the *gaṇas* of Durgā. A third is falling down headlong over the upraised sword of the *yōginī*. A fourth is lying dead before Mahishāsura, and the fifth is collapsing. The sixth is retreating with head turned back carrying sword and shield and a seventh has sat down kneeling as if in suppliance. The

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[1]One may be tempted to surmise that this shrine was dedicated to Vishṇu with his two consorts (as Śiva himself in the central shrine is shown with Umā and Skanda), in which case the southern shrine would be appropriate to Brahmā and, that this cave-temple might also have been one dedicated to the *trimūrtis*. Such a surmise would apparently derive strength from the position of Vishṇu to the north and Brahmā to the south of the background behind Śiva in the *Chaṇḍēśānugraha* group in the central shrine. But the presence of the horned *dvāra-pāla* at the southern shrine entrance and his counterpart with serpent would preclude such an identification as it would indicate that this shrine also was dedicated to Śiva. Perhaps, three forms of Śiva were to be installed in the three shrines.

entire grouping of the figures and depiction of the incident is forceful and graphic.[1]

Likewise, in a panel of similar size in the southern end wall, bounded by the *adhishṭhāna* below and the rough-cut *uttira* and pilasters above and on either side, is a finished and deep relief of Vishṇu as Anantaśāyi (pl. XLVIII). He is really Yōgaśayana-mūrti reclining on the couch formed by Ādiśēsha with his five hoods shading over the recumbent god's head. Vishṇu is two-armed and at his foot are the two *asuras*, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, conspiring with each other, their attitudes bringing out their common intention to strike at Vishṇu. Below the feet of Vishṇu is Bhū-dēvī kneeling down in prayer with her hands in *añjali*, while in front of her are what are believed by some to be two of the four *āyudha-purushas*, *Sudarśana* (*chakra*) and *Nandaka* (sword) depicted as two handsome youths, while the other two being those depicted as flying above Vishṇu as the dwarfish *Pāñchajanya* (*śaṅkha*) and the charming amazon *Kaumōdakī* representing *gadā*, all shown as if seeking the lord's permission for dealing with the *asuras* themselves.[2] In this depiction of Anantaśāyi with Madhu and Kaiṭabha, Śēsha is docile, while in other cases as in Tirumayam, he is shown as defying the *asuras* by his enraged attitude and flames of poison issuing out of his protruded tongues. The reclining figure of Vishṇu is a picture of peace and calm in contrast to the virility and movement of Durgā in the opposite panel. He has his head and chest slightly raised, while the other parts of his body are stretched flat on the bed as if rising up from it. The out-stretched right arm is taken behind, by the side of his head and the left arm is bent at the elbow with the hand held up in the *kaṭaka* pose. The right leg is fully stretched out, while the left is a little bent at the knee and slightly drawn up as if in the act of rising. Vishṇu is adorned with a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*, *hāras*, *kuṇḍalas* and a *yajñōpavīta*.

The choice of this particular form of Vishṇu in preference to others, to be sculptured in association with Mahishāsuramardinī in this cave-temple, would appear to be deliberate and significant. Both of them are certainly after the *Dēvī-mahātmya* tradition, which narrates in the first and second chapters the *yōga-nidrā* of Vishṇu and the story of the slaying of Mahisha by Dēvī. The feminine form on top shown as if flying away would, therefore, be the personification of contemplative sleep (*yōganidrā*), which form Śakti had assumed and by entering into Vishṇu made him lapse into half-slumber and half-contemplation, at the end of the *yuga*. When threatened by Madhu and Kaitabha and on the prayer of Brahmā, Śakti withdraws herself so that Vishṇu be roused to kill the *asuras*. She is said to have issued forth in her full form from Vishṇu's eyes, mouth, nose, arms, heart and chest enabling him to wake up and perceive Madhu and Kaitabha as depicted in the sculpture.[3]

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[1] The depiction follows the *Dēvī-mahātmya*, forming cantos 81 and 82 of the *Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa*, ed. Pargiter, *Bibliotheca Indica*—Translation of the *Mārkaṇḍēya-Purāṇa* (Calcutta, 1904).

[2] Gopinatha Rao (*Elements of Hindu Iconography* I, pt. i, pp. 109-10) identifies the two flying figures on top as *chakra* and *gadā* represented by the dwarf and the beautiful *dēvī* and the two kneeling figures below in front of Bhū-dēvī as Mārkaṇḍēya and Bhṛigu, though one of them wears a *jaṭā-makuṭa* and the other wears a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa* with a circular ornament on top. Both of them wear the *yajñōpavīta* in the *nīvīta*-fashion. Sivaramamurti (*Mahābalipuram*, p. 22) therefore identifies them with Sudarśana (discus) and Nandaka (sword), the *gadā* (club) being depicted clearly as a woman and *Pāñchajanya* (conch) as a dwarf.

[3] Vogel has almost meant this in his casual and hesitant remarks regarding the identification of the goddess as *yōga-nidrā* and the relation of the Anantaśāyi sculpture with that of Durgā (*Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1910-11 quoted by Longhurst, in *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 33, pp. 35-36). Incidentally such an identification would prove the existence in the seventh century of the tradition contained in cantos 81 and 82, *Mārkaṇḍēya-Purāṇa* (*Dēvīmāhātmya*), which is believed to be a much later interpolation in the main *purāṇa*, which is attributed to the fourth century A.D. If an interpolation it was, it must have been made before the seventh century. See P. Trivikrama Narayanan, *A Guide to Mahābalipuram*, (Bharati Vijayam Press, Madras), p. 30.

The three cells in this cave-temple were perhaps intended to enshrine three out of the five forms of Śiva that were to occupy the five shrines of the Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam as could be judged from the similarity of the *dvāra-pālas*. Of the three, the central one in the form of a bas-relief could have been completed only in Paramēśvara's time, judging from the fact that the two other shrines have blank walls, and it is usual for the sculptures of the subsidiary deities and those in the *maṇḍapa* to be carved in stone, while the shrine did not have one till Paramēśvara's time, as for example in the Varāha-maṇḍapa. Though the final stages of completion of this still-incomplete cave-temple are to be attributed to the early years of Paramēśvara, architecturally, the nature of its pillars would place it between the Kōṇēri- and Varāha-maṇḍapams. For while the Kōṇēri-maṇḍapa has the Mahēndra-type pillars for its façade and the Māmalla-type pillars with capitals of the order and without lion- or *vyāla*-bases for its inner row, it is the latter type that forms the façade of the Mahishamardinī-maṇḍapa with the inclusion of the *padma* and *phalaka* among the capital-components. This cave-temple also heralds the appearance of the lion- or *vyāla*-based pillars with capitals as found in its inner *maṇḍapa* which in turn go to form the façade of the Varāha-maṇḍapam and become the characteristic feature of the Māmalla style cave-temples and *rathas*.

Mahābalipuram: Trimūrti cave-temple (fig. 31; pls. XLIX and L)

This cave-temple is excavated on the almost vertical western face of the rock on the main hill at Mahābalipuram, at its northern end and as such has required very little cutting in to form a vertical scarp. The excavation occupies the entire height of the rock at this point. This temple is really a contiguity of three essentially similar shrine-fronts but dispenses with the usual front *maṇḍapa* or *maṇḍapas* and as a result shows over the *prastara* the *hāra* members that would surround next *tala*. As such it is a rock-cut reproduction of the façades of three shrines.[1] In fact the idea was to present the frontal aspects (or elevation) of the three *vimānas* from *adhishṭhāna* to the top level of the first storey, all placed contiguously, the central one standing a little forward, for the sake of greater prominence than the two lateral ones.

This idea of a *trikūṭa* (*trikūṭāchala*) or *vimānatraya* is found in the case of the Mūvarkōil, Koḍumbāḷur, where the three identical shrines stand in a row though separated from each other. The central *vimāna* of the Trimūrti cave-temple in addition to being a little more projected than the two lateral ones has a slightly greater length and breadth, the proportion as in the case of the shrines in the five-celled (*pañchakūṭa*) cave-temple or Kōṇēri maṇḍapam being 11:9. All the three shrines have the same type of *adhishṭhāna* which is contiguous and complete in all its parts, viz., *upāna*, *jagatī*,

[1] The Kōṇeri-maṇḍapam has five contiguous shrines shown at the rear end of the excavation. The shrines are preceded by two *maṇḍapas* and as such the shrine superstructure above their *prastaras* or cornice-level could not be shown while the parts that will be visible below the ceiling of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* alone could be shown. But over the *prastara* above the façade of the *mukha-maṇḍapa*, a row of *śālas* with interconnecting cloisters are shown correspondingly projected and recessed as the shrines inside. The idea was perhaps to present the front view of that section of the *mukha-maṇḍapa* for each shrine as in cases where on top the lowermost series of the *kūṭa-kōshṭa-pañjaras* of the *hāra* of the main *vimāna* are extended over the *maṇḍapas* in front e.g., in some of the extant early temples of the Pallava Chōla transition period, viz., the Vijayālaya-ōḷiśvaram and the early Chāḷukyan temples and even in the case of some later temples, e.g., Airāvatēśvara at Dārāśuram, of the late Chōḷa period and the Vijayanagara temples at Hampi and in the Chāḷuyan area. The presence of the *hāra* over the façade becomes a special feature of the *maṇḍapa* type Māmalla style cave temples, that followed the Koṇēri *maṇḍapam*.

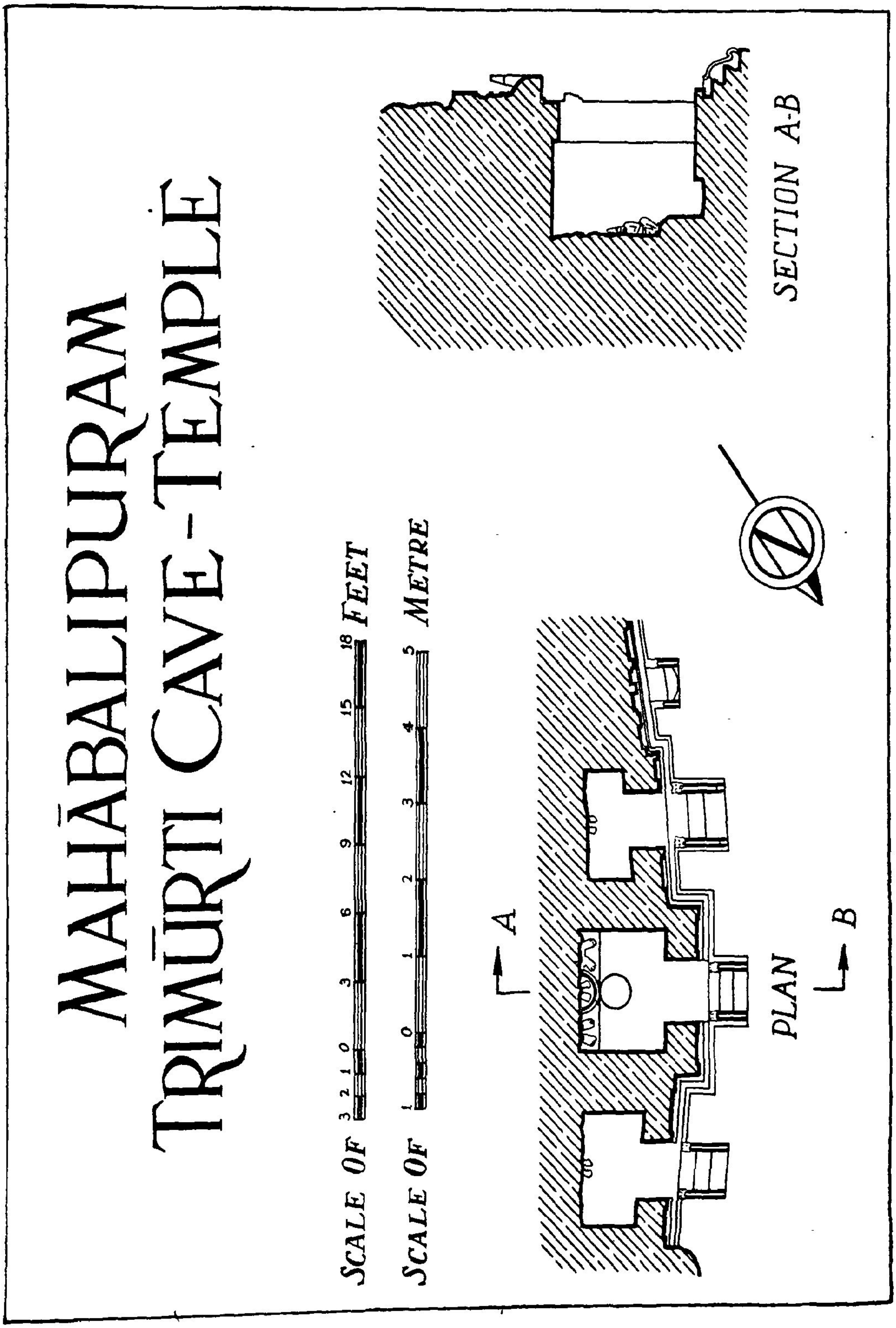
MAHĀBALIPURAM
TRIMŪRTI CAVE-TEMPLE
SCALE OF 3 2 1 0 3 6 9 12 15 18 FEET
SCALE OF 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 METRE
SECTION A-B
A
B
PLAN

FIG. 31

tripatta-kumuda, *kampa*, *kaṇṭha* and *pattikā*. Springing from the lower level of the *paṭṭikā* in each shrine are three pairs of *śurulyāḷi* parapets enclosing three steps between them forming three *sōpānas* mounted on low platforms which are extensions of the main *upāna*. The proboscis of the *śurulyāḷi* parapet issuing from the well-defined *vyāla*-mouth is octagonally moulded with the free end below curled up. All the three steps of the central shrine are semi-circular, the upper two resemble *padma-pīṭhas*, in that they have a marked constriction in their middle plane, the lowermost forming the *chandra-śilā* proper. The steps of the *sōpānas* of the lateral shrines are slightly different, in that the two upper steps are oblong, while the lowermost is a *chandra-śilā*.

The wall of the central shrine rising in front shows four *kuḍya-stambhas* (pilasters) the inner two flanking the tall oblong shrine-entrance, the outer two cantoning the inturning corners, and visible both frontally and laterally on account of the projection of the central *vimāna*, thus having more or less the aspect of full pillars. The three shrine-entrances of the Trimūrti cave, like those in the Kōṇeri-maṇḍapam, are devoid of jambs, lintels and sills, the pilasters directly flanking them, and the regular beam forming the top piece.

The pilasters are uniformly tetragonal from base to *vīra-kaṇṭha*, the top of the shaft having the components, *mālāsthāna*, *padma-bandha*, *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kumbha*, *padma*, *phalaka* and *vīrakaṇṭha* at the apex supporting *pōtikās* with *taraṅga*-mouldings, but without the median *paṭṭa*. Over the corbels runs the beam crossed over at the corners, as if by scarf-joints. Some of the corbel-blocks are unfinished, in that the *taraṅga*-rolls have not been cut. Over the beam runs the eaves-board (*valabhī*) carried over a *vājana* with a frieze of *haṁsas*, twelve in number. The two ends of the frieze are, however, marked by smaller lions in a line with the *haṁsas*. Over this frieze projects the *kapōta* with four *kūḍus* placed in front, the two central ones coming above the shrine entrance and the two extreme ones over the two corner pilasters. The corners of the *kapōta* are embellished by embossed scroll-work of the *kōṇa-paṭṭa*. On the inturning sides of the *kapōta*, corresponding to the lateral walls of the projected shrine are shown faintly two more *kūḍu*-arches each coming over the corbel of the corner pillar visible from that side. Over the *kapōta* runs a *vyāḷavari* with projecting *makara*-heads at the corners carrying on top a *hāra* of two *karṇa-kūṭas*, one at either extremity, corresponding to the corners of the *vimāna*, and a *śālā* in the centre, coming right over the shrine-entrance, the whole series connected by a parapet-like *hārāntara*. However, the end views of the transverse beams are not shown here below the curved coping of the parapet-like *hārāntara* as in the other cases, e.g., the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam, as also the *alpa-nāsikās*. The place of these usual *alpa-nāsikā* openings with *kūḍu* arches is taken by the representation of a larger opening between two pillars with corbels on top as would be the case if the interconnecting portions or *hārāntara* were pillared *maṇḍapas* open on either side. While the *karṇa-kūṭas* have single *stūpis*, the *śālā* has two, in addition to the shovel-head finials of the two arched openings, *tōraṇas* with *mukha-paṭṭis*, one at either end. In front, the *karṇa-kūṭas* and the *śālā* have *alpa-nāsikās*, their top formed by the *kūḍu*-arch with a shovel-finial. The curved roof (*śālākāra*) of the *hārāntara*, one on either side of the central *kōshṭha*, also carries a single *stūpi* on top.

The two lateral shrines resemble in all respects the central shrine described, except in the case of the *hāra* structures over their *prastaras*. The *hāra* of the southern shrine resembles that of the central shrine, in that it has a *karṇa-kūṭa* at its southern end, a central *śālā*, but in place of the inner *karṇa-kūṭa* a *karṇa-śālā* not completely finished, and shown as merging into the *hāra* of the adjoining shrine. The *hāra* of the northern shrine, however, differs from the other two, in that all the three are *śālās*, the central *bhadra-śālā* and the lateral *karṇa-śālās*. The extreme *śālās* are shown only partially, the rest as if

merging into the rock-flank on one side and the adjoining shrine on the other, with one *stūpi*, also shown in each case lateral to the line of the *kūdu*-finial in front and not opposite to it as in the *karṇa-kūṭas*. The intervening cloisters or *hārāntara* connecting the *karṇa-kūṭa* and *śālās* in the southern shrine and the three *śālās* in the northern shrine do not show the side openings between pilasters as seen in the corresponding parts of the central shrine; nor do they have *stūpi*. The further elaboration of the *talas* in the three shrines was, however, not attempted, because the top of the rock had already been reached.

The three shrines, respectively, are believed to be dedicated to Brahmā in the north, Śiva in the centre and Vishṇu in the south. Flanking the entrance of the Brahmā shrine on either side and each accommodated into a very narrow niche are two *dvāra-pālas* of unusual form. Because of the narrow space they are in three-quarters profile. Both are bearded, with *jaṭā-makuṭas*, wearing *yajñōpavītas* of three strands, flat like a band, in the normal fashion. Their *vastras* extend up to their ankles. Both of them are facing the shrine with their inner hands (left in the case of the northern and right in the case of the southern) holding a flower. The other hands (left in the case of the southern *dvāra-pāla* and right in the case of the northern) are placed on the hips in *kaṭi*. The northern *dvāra-pāla* carries in addition what is taken to be a ladle or *śruk* in his right hand placed on the hip. Otherwise, both are similar in apparel and head-dress. The main deity inside has a single face and is standing in *sama-bhaṅga* with two *rudrāksha* garlands crossing the chest in *chhannavīra* fashion and going round both his elbows in the manner of *nīvīta-yajñōpavīta*. The upper arms hold lotus and *aksha-mālā*, while the lower arms are in *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita*. On top at either side are two flying *gaṇas*, their inner hands raised in adoration. The *gaṇa* on the north holds in his right hand a *stylus*(?) and in his arm-pit what appears to be a cadjan leaf-book (*pustaka*). He wears a *rudrāksha-yajñōpavīta*. The *gaṇa* on the south carries in his left hand what appears to be a bowl of offerings. Sitting on either side at the bottom are two devotees, kneeling, with *jaṭā-makuṭas* and with *vastra-yajñōpavītas*. Their inner hands (left in the case of the northern and right in the case of the southern figures) are held up in adoration, while the other hand in each case is placed on the chest. On the top of the *prati* (the top surface of the *adhishṭhāna* in front of the Brahmā shrine) are inscribed three Pallava-Grantha letters in simple script reading *Malla* which is a general tribal name and often a suffix of the Pallavas. The central figure is to be identified as Subrahmaṇya in the form of Brahmaśāstā.[1]

[1] Dubreuil, *Archéologie du Sud De l' Inde*, II, p. 49, states that the God in the left (northern) cell which has only one head could not be identified with Brahmā, but could be only Subrahmaṇya, who is also represented in the ground floor of the Dharmarāja-ratha. Gopinatha Rao, while editing the Maṇḍagappaṭṭu cave-inscription of Mahēndra (*Epigraphia Indica*, XVII, p. 16) which states that the cave-temple was dedicated to the Trimūrtis—Brahmā, Śiva and Vishṇu (Hari-Hara-Pitāmaha of iconography—see *Hindu Iconography*, I, part I, pp. 251-56, pl.LXXII) also states that Brahmā cannot be represented with one head but is to be shown, according to the *Āgamas*, with four, three at least being made visible in relief sculptures. He does not agree with Vogel who in his Iconographic notes on the Seven Pagodas (*Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1910-11, p. 58) identifies it as Brahmā. Rao therefore (in accordance with his *Hindu Iconography*, II, pt. ii, p. 439), identifies him as Brahmasāsta which is an aspect of Subrahmaṇya in which he put down the pride of Brahmā by exposing his ignorance of the Vēdas, and where he should be represented with a single face and four arms and with only two eyes, and in his back hands there should be *akshamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu* (as is the case in the sculpture) and the two front hands should be in *abhaya* and *varada*. The two bearded sage-like *dvārapālas* and the *rudrāksha* chaplet of the God inside would according to him confirm this identification. There is a similar figure in the lower rock-cut cave at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi, where in the same row are represented Brahmā, Ganēśa, Durgā, Sūrya in addition, which would confirm the above identification.

The *dvāra-pālas* of the Śiva shrine are different from those of the Subrahmaṇya shrine and also from each other. Both of them are in three-quarters profile, owing to the narrowness of the niche, the heads alone turned a little front. Both are two-armed wearing *yajñōpavītas* with tassels in the normal fashion. Both wear *karaṇḍa-makuṭas* and *patra-kuṇḍalas* in the ears. The southern *dvāra-pāla* stands with the palm of his right hand placed on top of a massive club while the left is in *kaṭi.* The northern *dvāra-pāla* holds in his left hand a lance as tall as himself along with a small shield; his right is placed in *kaṭi.* On the back wall of the shrine is cut in bas-relief the form of Śiva standing in *sama-bhaṅga* four-armed, the upper two arms holding the *paraśu* and *aksha-mālā* and the lower two in *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita.* On top, on either side, are two flying *gaṇas* (both wearing *yajñopavītas* in the ordinary fashion), their inner arms in adoration, the outer arms resting on their bent knees. Lower down are two figures kneeling in slightly different poses with the knees spread out as if squatting on one of their thighs. The northern one holds a flower in his right hand, while his left is placed on the left thigh as in *kaṭi.* The southern one has both his hands together holding a bunch of flowers and making a *pushp-āñjali.* In front on the floor of the shrine, inserted into a socket is a polished black stone *liṅga* without the *āvuḍaiyār.* It is complete in all its three parts—square (inserted into the socket), octagonal and circular, representing the Brahmā, Vishṇu, and Rudra-bhāgas. This is obviously a subsequent insertion.

On either side of the southernmost shrine are two other *dvāra-pālas* in three-quarters profile, their inner hands in *sūchi* and outer in *vismaya.* They wear *kirīṭa-makuṭas.* While the northern one wears the *yajñōpavīta* in the normal fashion, the southern one wears it in the *nivīta*-fashion. Inside the cell on the back wall is carved Vishṇu, standing, four-armed in *sama-bhaṅga,* the upper two arms holding *chakra* and *śaṅkha* (*chakra* in the *prayōga* posture), the lower in *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita.* Unlike the Kīḻmāvilaṅgai Vishṇu, who also has the same pose and ornaments, the *vastra* or garment reaches both the ankles, and is tucked in between the legs with a central pleated fold or *kachcha.* The *yajñōpavīta* is in the *nivīta*-fashion as in the case of Śiva. There are again two flying *gaṇas* on top on either side, identical except for the fact that the southern one wears a *yajñōpavīta* in the *nivīta*-fashion while the northern one has no *yajñōpavīta,* with their inner hands stretched in adoration. Lower down are two devotees kneeling and in identical posture, their inner hands in adoration, and the outer placed on their thighs.

Standing a little recessed in the same line and over an *adhishṭhāna* moulding which is a continuation of that of the three shrine fronts is a niche flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a *makara-tōraṇa.* In front of the *adhishṭhāna* is a *sōpāna* of two steps, the upper one rectangular and the lower one a *chandra-śilā,* both flanked by two *śuruḷyāḷi* parapets.

Placed in the niche is an eight-armed Durgā (pl. L) standing on the head of a buffalo (representing Mahishāsura) in *sama-bhaṅga* as in the four-armed Varāha-maṇḍapam sculpture and without the *padma-pīṭha* or the other attendant figures. She holds alternately in her right and left hands *chakra* and *śaṅkha, khaḍga* and *dhanus, ghaṇṭā* and *khēṭaka,* while the remaining right and left hands are in *abhaya* and *kaṭi* respectively. She wears a *kirīṭā-makuṭa,* large *patra-kuṇḍalas,* a narrow *kuchabandha* and *chhanna-vīra* in the *nivīta*-fashion. Her garment secured at the waist by a *kaṭi-bandha* reaches down to her anklets in the form of a *kachcha.* There is a folded *uttarīya* round the hips knotted on the sides with tassels and pleats. The pilasters are identical in all respects with those of the three adjoining shrines. Over the *phalakas* of the two pilasters are two *makaras,* with floriated tails, curling out and hanging down on two sides, each with a rider on top. Issuing from the mouths of the *makaras* is a floral *tōraṇa* thrown up into two loops which descend to meet each other forming a trough. In the arches of the crested loops are carved figures which have become

indistinct now. The trough of the loop is supported by a lotus bracket and over the loop is a *siṁha-lalāṭa*. Thus this would combine the forms of a *stambha-tōraṇa* and a *bhitti-tōraṇa* inasmuch as it is on a wall and over the *kuḍya-stambhas* or a *dvāra-śobhā* adorning a shrine-entrance. At the southern extreme corner is shown a cantoning pilaster with a *taraṅga*-corbel on top thus suggesting a fourth shrine for Durgā with the superstructure not completed, with its *sōpāna* in front and the pilasters at either extreme. This simulates the front elevation of the Draupadī-ratha, minus its *prastara* and *śikhara*.

This shrine-contiguity assignable to the early period of Parmēśvara deserves comparison with the monolithic *rathas*, in that like the *rathas* it attempts to show the external architectural features, particularly, the front elevation of contemporary structural *vimānas*.

Mahābalipuram: unfinished cave-temples

Three large unfinished excavations executed in the Māmalla style and belonging to this period are important from the point of view of certain features that they still present in their unfinished condition.

1. PULIPUDAR-MAṆḌAPAM (fig. 32; pl. LI A).—This excavation of a five-celled cave temple with an oblong *maṇḍapa* in front is located at the highest point on the western side of the hill overlooking the Kōṇērippaḷḷam tank at Mahābalipuram. The vertical natural scarp near the crest of the hill at this point has been chosen for excavation and the initial cutting is of a comparatively small depth and uniform all round, the façade line consisting of four pillars and two pilasters *in antis* coming behind the cutting. The pillars and pilasters have their bases carved out into squatting *vyālas* showing different degrees of finish. The shafts above the *vyālas* as well as capital-components have not been finished in their details though the initial shaping has been completed. Likewise, the corbels with curved profile and also the beam above have not received final shaping. Cut into the back wall of the *maṇḍapa* behind the façade are five oblong shrine-entrances. While the excavation of four of them had progressed to a certain extent, the excavation of the fifth had just started when it was abandoned. Over the façade, the *hāra*, common to the Māmalla cave-temples was not cut, and it is also clear that it was not designed to be cut, as is the case also in a similar unfinished cave-temple called by some Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam adjoining the finished Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam proper to its north. This cave-temple would perhaps mark the decadent stage in the Māmalla style in that it has *vyāla*-pillars but no *hāra* over the *prastara* and in that the shrine-fronts inside have no *adhishṭhāna* or pilasters.

2. UNFINISHED CAVE-TEMPLE NEAR KŌṆĒRI-MAṆḌAPAM (fig. 33; pl. LI B).—The unfinished cave-temple north of the Kōṇēri-maṇḍapam (or the finished five-celled cave-temple) cut on the western slope of the low rock on top of the hill is also interesting. On its façade of four pillars and two pilasters it reproduces the same plan as that of the Pulipudar-maṇḍapam, the *vyāla*-pillars showing different stages of finish of the *vyālas*. While the three northern pillars have the *vyāla*-figures carved in the rock, the southern pillar and both the pilasters still remain square without the *vyālas* being cut. Likewise the shafts on top show different stages of cutting—rough blocking in the case of the pilasters, square shaping in the case of the southern pillar and reduction of the square into an octagon in the case of the three other pillars. The capital-components as well as the abacus or *phalaka* have been cut out in rough, their details not being attempted. There is also no differentiation between the bevelled corbels and the beam though both of them have been carved out *en masse*. The top line of the cutting acts as a rough *kapōta* without any *hāra* on top, while the deeper cutting at the base in front acts as a platform in front of the *maṇḍapa*. At the centre of the back wall is cut a projecting shrine-front with an opening

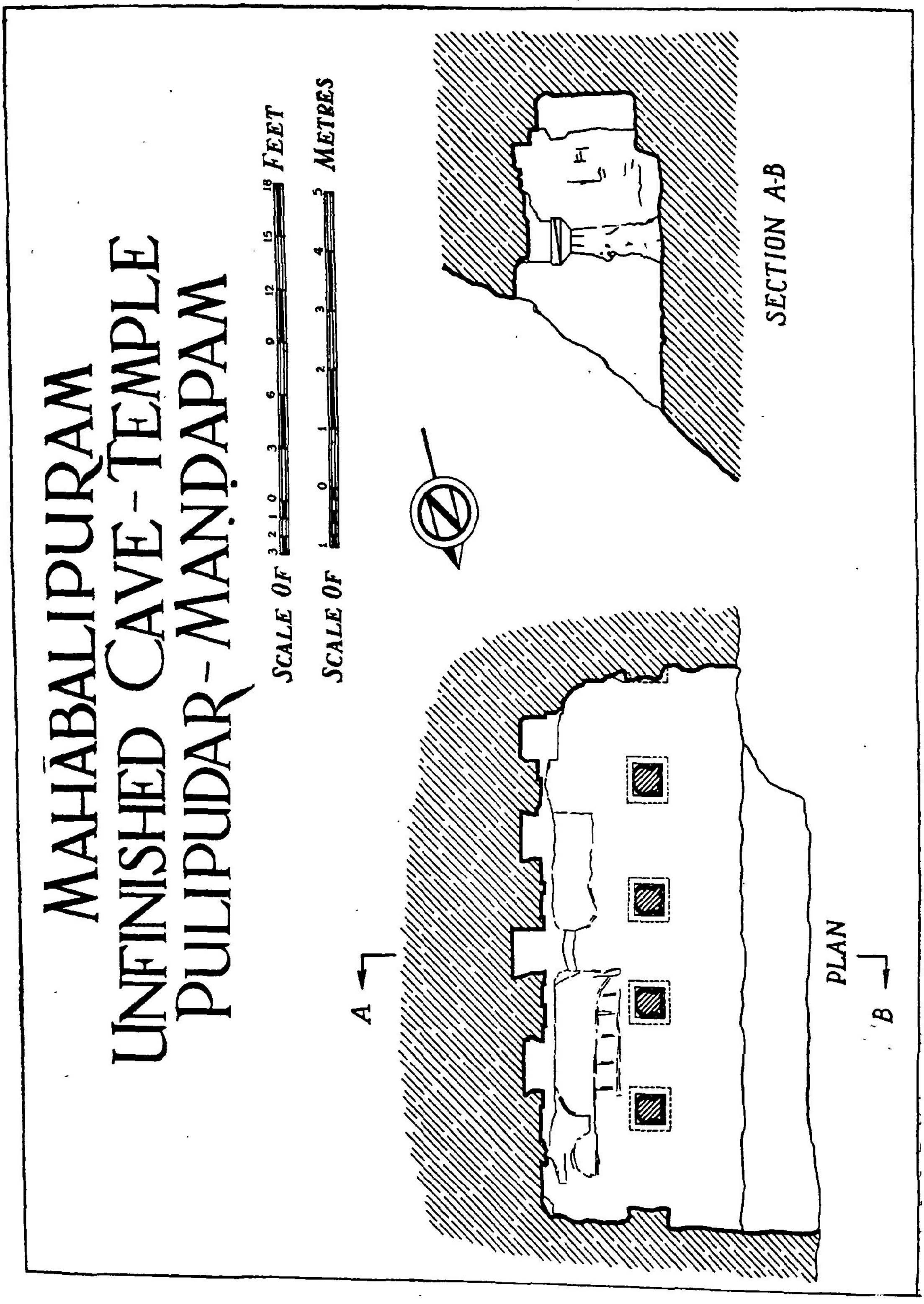
MAHĀBALIPURAM
UNFINISHED CAVE-TEMPLE
PULIPUDAR-MAṆḌAPAM
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
PLAN
A
B

FIG. 32

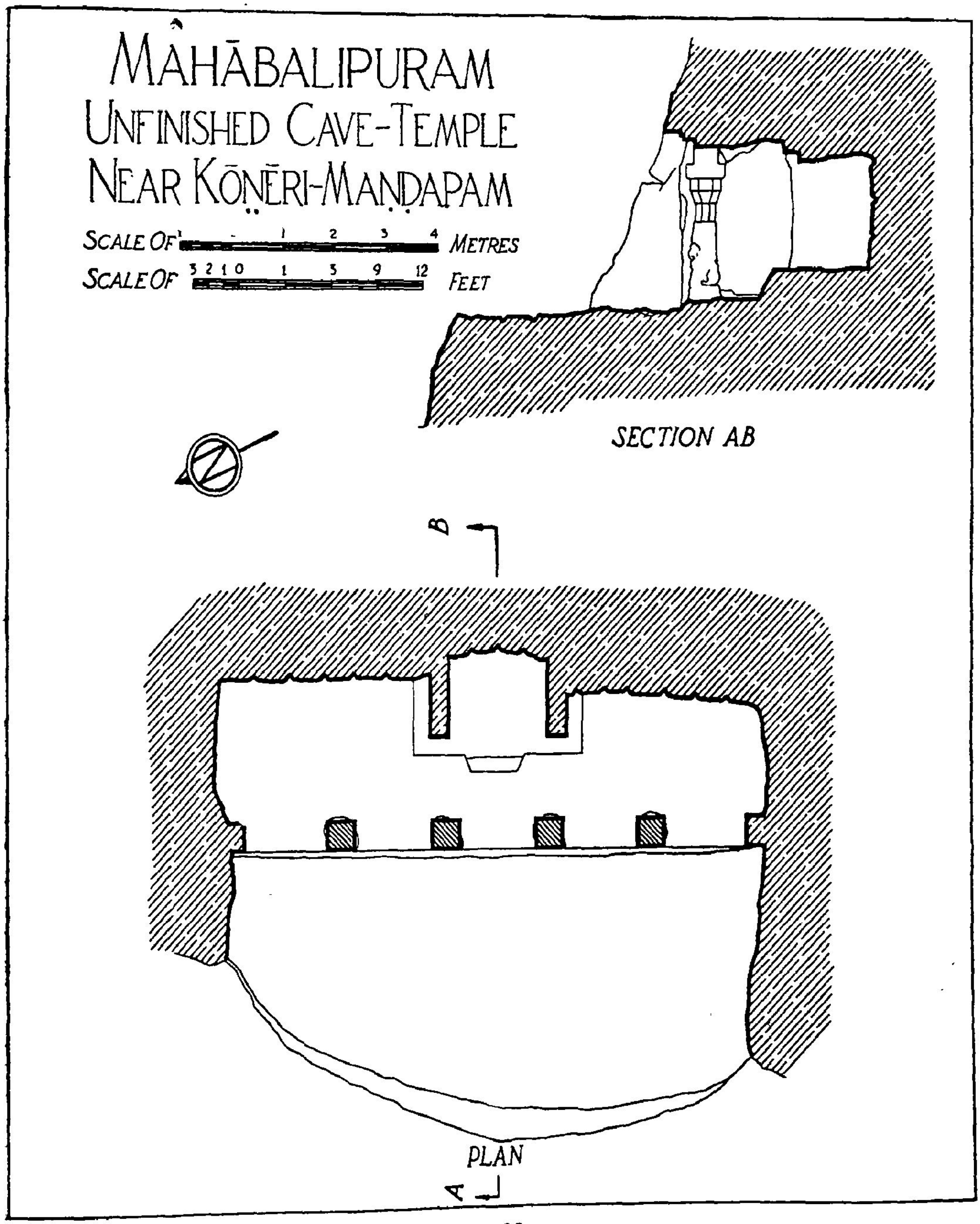
MÂHĀBALIPURAM
UNFINISHED CAVE-TEMPLE
NEAR KŌṆĒRI-MAṆḌAPAM
SCALE OF METRES
SCALE OF FEET
SECTION AB
B
PLAN
A

FIG. 33

in the centre with an unfinished *adhishṭhāna* below and *sōpāna* in front. The excavation of the shrine-cell has gone half-way through. From the deep cutting on either side of this shrine projection, one has to infer that the idea was to cut into the rock deeper on either side and connect the two lateral passages behind by a transverse tunnelling so as to form a circumambulatory round the central shrine, thus to isolate it as a monolithic *vimāna*. This, as well as the absence of any indication to cut the *hāra* over the façade, would show that this excavation was attempted late in the period of Māmalla as in the similar instance of the large unfinished cave-temple at Māmaṇḍur of the Mahēndra-type, where a similar attempt to cut a circumambulatory round the central row of five shrines was abandoned owing to faults in the rock. This also marks the decadent stage of the Māmalla style.

3. PAÑCHĀPAṆDAVA-MAṆḌAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE (fig. 34; pl. LII).—This unfinished cave-temple excavated into the rock immediately to the south of the Arjuna's Penance bas-relief is perhaps the largest excavation attempted at Mahābalipuram. This shows greater advances over the two other unfinished cave-temples and is an example nearer the perfect Māmalla-type than the other two, in that it has not only the *vyāla*-based pillars but also the row of *kūṭas* and *śālās* on top of the façade.

The design, if completed, would have consisted of a central rock-cut shrine, surrounded by a pillared *maṇḍapa* all round permitting perambulation. The original rock-face has been cut to a depth of about 1 ft. on the northern side and about 5 ft. at the base and 1 ft. at the top and on the southern side for a vertical scarp. The base of the scarp to a height of about 3 ft. is left as an unmoulded *adhishṭhāna*. Over this platform and set back about half a foot from its edge is a façade of six pillars and two pilasters, the pillars and pilasters with sejant *vyāla*-bases mounted on square *pīṭhas*. The shaft issuing from the top of the *vyālas* in the case of each of the pillars is octagonal with a broad *padma-bandha*, and similarly-shaped components of the capitals viz. *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kumbha* and *padma*, while the *phalaka* alone remains large and square. While the *vyālas* face front in the case of the pillars, those in the case of the two pilasters face each other. The shafts of the pilasters are four-sided as also the capital-members. The *vīra-kaṇṭha* over the *phalaka* is prominent and square carrying the long corbels with the *taraṅga*-mouldings without the median *paṭṭa* as could be seen in the finished examples. The beam is of the same thickness as of the corbels and projected in front of the beam is a flexed *kapōta*. The undersurface of the *kapōta* has not been scooped into a concavity, while externally its flexture has been shown, and well behind the *kapōta* is a *hāra* of *kūṭas* and *śālās*. The central portion of this *hāra* is projected forward, the projected length being equal to the length of the *aṅkaṇas* between the four central pillars of the front line, while the lengths of the *hāra* on either side are set back. The projected part of the *hāra* consists of two *karṇa-kūṭas* with three *śālās* in between. The *kūṭas* and *śālās* have projected *alpa-nāsikās*, the pilaster portion of the *nāsikās* showing enclosed trellis or *jālaka* forms. The *śālās* have two *stūpis* each. The two recessed lengths of the *hāra* consist of two *śālās* each. The *kūṭas* and *śālās* which are completely finished in all details resemble those in the other finished caves. The northern *karṇa-kūṭa* and the two *śālās* adjoining are, however, broken by a rock-fall. Abutting the *kapōta* and springing from the top of the *phalaka* are three rearing *vyālas*, one facing front and the other two facing out on either side, the lateral *vyālas* with riders on their backs. While these *vyāla* caryatids are found over the pillars, they are absent on the pilasters. This is the most peculiar feature which is not found in any other cave-temple either of Mahēndra or of the Māmalla type, though they are often found singly over the corner pilasters of shrine-fronts in some of the other Pallava cave-temples, in the porch of the shrine in the Mahishamardinī cave and in the structural *vimānas* of the Pallavas and early Chōḷas. They are also found in the Badami caves.

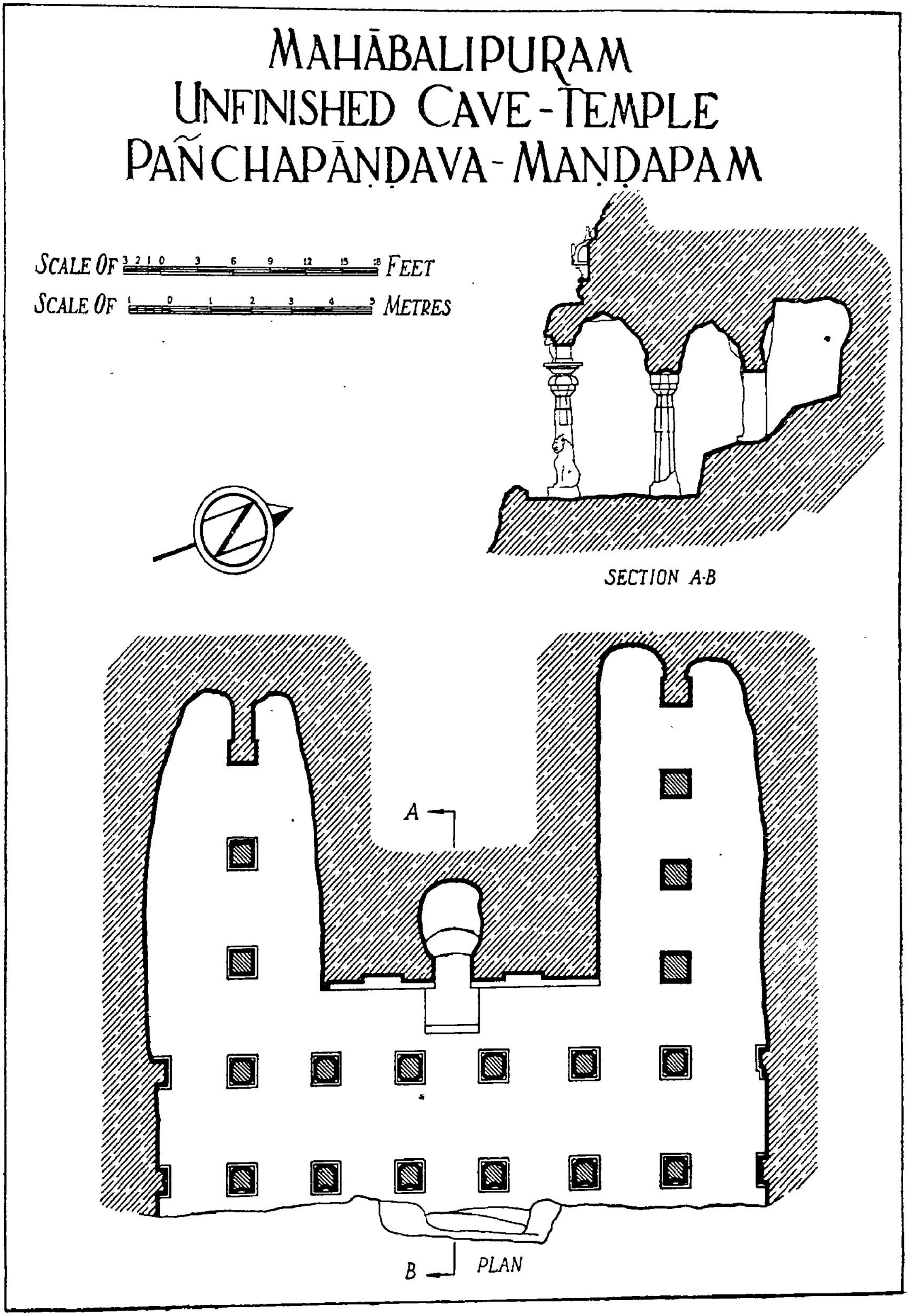
MAHĀBALIPURAM
UNFINISHED CAVE-TEMPLE
PAÑCHAPĀṆḌAVA-MAṆḌAPAM
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
A
B
PLAN

FIG. 34

In front of the two central pillars, a mass of the original rock has been left for the cutting of a *sōpāna*, which, if completed, would have consisted of two lateral flights of steps with a central landing and a parapet in front.

Behind the façade row is a second row of four pillars and two pilasters, which are not, however, *vyāla*-based. Behind these, occupying the central part and corresponding in length to the projected length of the *hāra* on top (that is occupying the length of the three *aṅkaṇas* in the middle) is a shrine, oblong in so far as it is cut, with an entrance in the middle and two niches, one on either side. The pilasters and other details have not been cut as also the *sōpāna* in front for which sufficient rock has been left *in situ*. On either side in a line with the façade of the shrine is a pillar each, also in alignment with the corresponding pillar of the front row. Behind this pillar are two more pillars, one behind the other. Thus, the two lateral sides of the shrine have been cut into till the back wall of the *maṇḍapa* is reached. The cutting of the rock behind the shrine intended to take the pillared circumambulatory round the central shrine has not been commenced. Except the façade row of pillars and pilasters which show different stages of completion, mostly lacking only the final touches by way of details, the others inside, which were also designed with *vyāla*-bases, show different stages of completion from rough blocks to octagonal shafts. This would have been a unique example of a Māmalla cave-temple if it had been completed and would form the third in the whole series of the Pallava cave-temples where a central shrine with an ambulatory (double) pillared *maṇḍapa* was designed, and that too with the pillared *maṇḍapa* indicating by its *hāra* four cardinal projections simulating the *chaturmukha* type.

This cave-temple resembles the Trimūrti cave-temple in that the *kūṭa* is introduced for the first time in the *hāra*. Its unique feature is the *vyāla* caryatids with riders on top of the pillar-capitals as in the Chāḷukyan examples. The plan of the excavation with a central monolithic shrine surrounded by a double-pillared cloister is an advanced feature. This has, therefore, to be placed later among the Māmalla style cave-temples in the period of Paramēśvara, if not of his successor Rājasiṁha.

Mahābalipuram: Paramēśvara-Mahā-Varāha-Vishṇu-gṛiha (Ādi-Varāha) cave-temple (fig. 35; pls. LIII-LVI)

This cave-temple, in worship, on the western side of the northern end of the main hill in Mahābalipuram, Chingleput District is so called in order to distinguish it from a similar rock-cut temple near the northern end of the same hill, which is commonly called the 'Varāha-maṇḍapam' (p. 141). Both of them are of the same (Māmalla) style and are rock-cut *maṇḍapas* with a fane of miniature shrines over the façade of the *maṇḍapa* and a shrine behind. The early Chōḷa inscriptions of Rājēndra I[1] relating to this temple call it *Paramēśvara-Mahā-Varāha-Vishṇu-gṛiham*, indicating clearly that it was consecrated in the time of Paramēśvara-varman and named after him, though generally this cave-temple is often grouped along with those excavated by Māmalla. This shows some advanced features and greater elaboration than in the Varāha-maṇḍapam, though it contains replicas of some of the bas-relief panels of the Varāha-maṇḍapam, which are almost identical if not of better workmanship. The two panels that are reproduced here are those of Gaja-Lakshmī and Mahisha-mardinī. The Trivikrama and Varāha panels are not reproduced, but the main shrine contains a painted stucco bas-relief of Varāha more or less of the same iconographic type as that in the Varāha-maṇḍapa. It is to be noted here that the principal deity installed in the shrine

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, nos. 377-8; pp. 113-14.

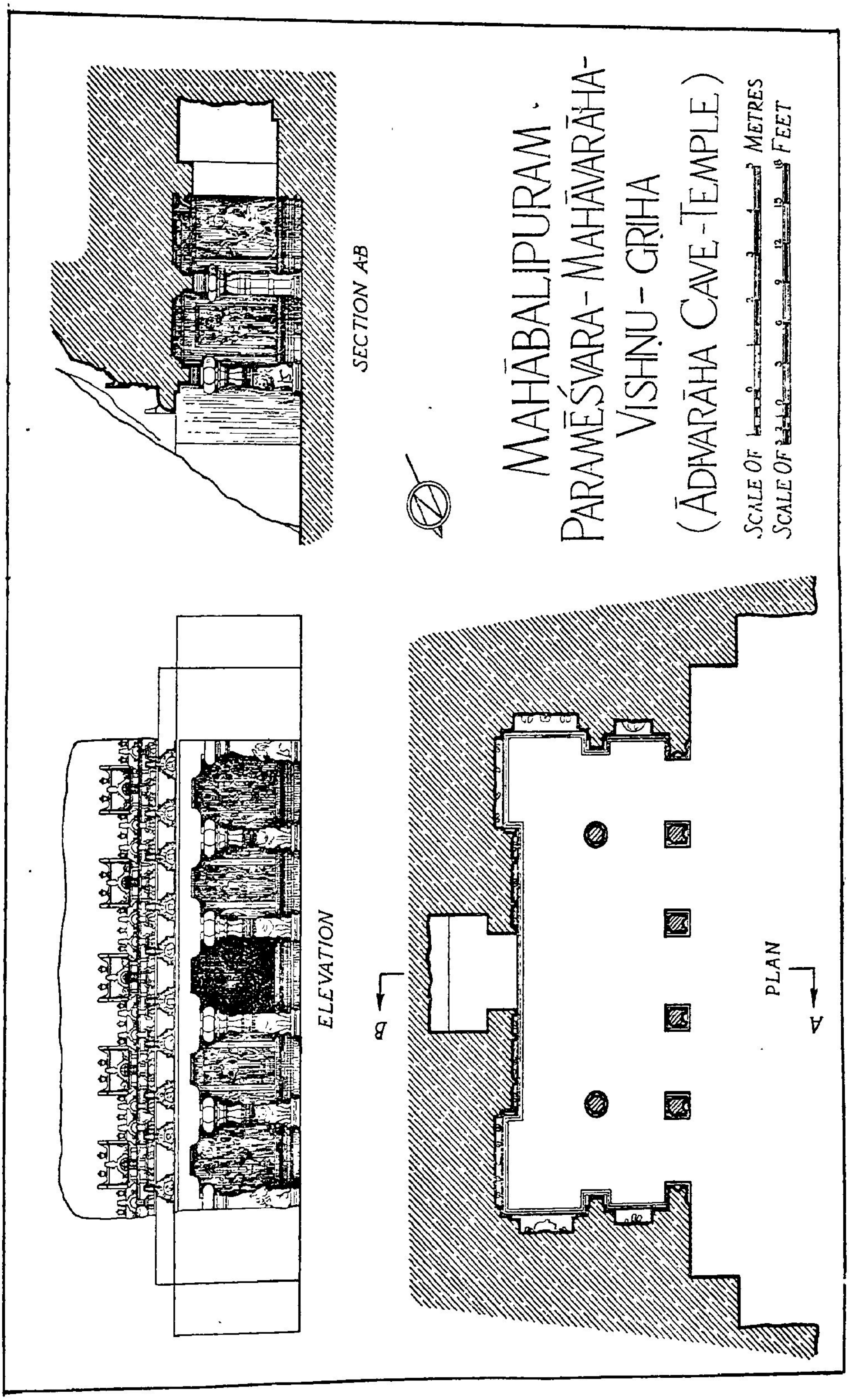
SECTION A-B
ELEVATION
PLAN
A
B
MAHĀBALIPURAM -
PARAMĒŚVARA-MAHĀVARĀHA-
VISHṆU-GṚIHA
(ĀDIVARĀHA CAVE-TEMPLE)
SCALE OF METRES
SCALE OF FEET

FIG. 35

is Ādi-Varāha or Bhū-Varāha, whereas in the Varāha-maṇḍapam, there is no extant clue as to the nature of the principal deity installed. The Varāha bas-relief in the latter is only one of the subsidiary panels carved in the *maṇḍapa* and does not occupy the principal position inside the shrine.

This excavation consists of a large oblong pillared *maṇḍapa* facing west with an oblong rock-cut shrine behind also facing west, the shrine-front projecting into the *maṇḍapa* to a length of about 2 ft.

The pillars of the *maṇḍapa* are in two rows, thus dividing it into two parts, the front *mahā-maṇḍapa* and the rear *ardha-maṇḍapa*. The pillars in the façade of the *mahā-maṇḍapa* are *vyāla*-pillars with *vyālas* taking the place of their shafts squatting on their haunches over oblong *ōmas* which are *padma-pīṭhas*. There are four such pillars with two more pilasters, one at either extreme. The *vyālas* of the pillars face front, while those of the pilasters face each other north-south. On top of the *vyāla*-pillars, the emerging apex of the shaft is decorated by a very broad *padma-bandha* with a row of lotus-petals on top and *mālāsthāna* of looped strings of pearl and beads at the bottom, and broad floral rosettes in between, bounded above and below by a string of larger beads. The *kalaśa* over the *padma-bandha* is octagonal as also the *tāḍi*, *kanṭha* and bulbous *kumbha* above. The *vīra-kanṭha* too is octagonal (while it ought to be usually square according to the *Śilpa* canons) and carries large corbels with gently-curved profiles and large rolls of *taraṅga*. The long erected tails of the *vyālas* behind are looped forward to reach over the manes, again looping down so as to form double curves, the bunch of hair at the tip brushing the flank of the animal. The shafts rising on top of the *vyāla*-pilasters are quadrangular. While the *padma-bandha* and *mālāsthāna* at the northern end pilaster are complete in all details, those on the southern end pilaster have just been indicated and show less of detail. The *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kanṭha*, and *kumbha* are likewise four-sided as also the *vīra-kanṭha* on top. The corbels are of the same type as the other corbels over the pillars. Over the corbels runs the beam (*uttira*), equal in width to the corbels below and of the same height, and above it is the doucene-like *valabhī* placed between two *vājanas* of a width greater than that of the beams, the upper *vājana* supporting the ceiling. Internally, this *valabhī* is decorated by a series of scrolls and foliage similar to that in the Varāha-maṇḍapam. The design of this scroll-work is peculiar to these two cave-temples suggesting later work. Externally, the *valabhī*-course is obscured by the structural *maṇḍapa* added to the front in late Vijayanagara times. Projecting above the terrace of this *maṇḍapa* are seen the *hāra* portions above the *prastara*.

In front of the *kapōta* are ten large *kūḍu*-arches with shovel-finials (*śakti-dhvaja*) sticking out over the terrace of the structural Vijayanagara *maṇḍapa*. Behind, on top of the cornice, is a string of four *śālās* or *kōshṭhas* interconnected by a parapet-like *hārāntara* which does not show the ends of transverse joists below the coping-like top. The *śālās* are typical with *alpa-nāsikās* in front and *tōraṇas* at either end of their wagon-top *śikharas*, the *kūḍu*-like arches in all the cases carrying shovel-finials. The front *alpa-nāsikās* of the *śālas* show that they are *jālakas* as in the oblong portions below their arches, coming between the two pilasters, are shown trellis-work of different patterns. On top of this *jālaka* and projecting from the centre of the *kūḍu*-arch is the doucene-like projecting end of the cross rafter with two side brackets supporting the ribbing inside, with a hole on top serving as the light opening or dovecot. A similar motif but larger, representing the central longitudinal beam of the *śālā* is found at the end faces of the *śālā-śikhara*, inside the large end *tōraṇas*. Each *śālā* is provided with two *stūpis*, while the intervening *hāra*-lengths have three, alternating with the front shovel-finials of their *kshudra-nāsikās*. Here too, some of these *nāsikās* show the *jālaka*-work suggesting windows at their lower portions while others do not thus indicate the *hārāntara* as cloister lengths connecting the *śālās*. All their *kūḍu*-arches

show only floral representations inside and not the cut-beam-and-reaper ends as in the front *nāsikās* of the *kōshṭhas.* At either extreme of the string of five *śālās*, the *hāra* is continued as *hārāntaras*, each with a single *kshudra-nāsikā*. Below the *śālās* as well as the *hārāntara*, the simulated basal timber frame-work is decorated with a *vyāḷavari*, the *vyālas* representing the front ends of cross-joists while the longitudinal beams interconnecting these joists near their terminals, are projected at the corners in the form of *makara*-heads.

The inner row of pillars separating the *mahā-maṇḍapa* and the *ardha-maṇḍapa* consists of two pillars only,set with a wide gap in between equal to the width of the three *aṅkaṇas* of the front row, and two pilasters. These correspond in position to the extreme pillars and pilasters of the front row respectively. The position of these two pillars also corresponds to the two front corners of the projecting inner shrine. Thus, the elimination of the central pair of pillars and the resulting wider intercolumniation was to afford a full view of the façade of the inner shrine-front. The two pillars are not *vyāla*-based but are of octagonal section throughout, standing on circular *padma-pīṭhas*. The octagonal shaft of each has at its middle height a *madhya-paṭṭa* or-*bandha* which is a band of two rows of lotus-petals, the upper ones erect and the lower ones inverted, with an intervening string of large beads. The two rows of petals are each multi-seriate. The top of the shaft is marked by the *padma-bandha* and *mālāsthāna* as on the pillars in front, but slightly smaller in height. The *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, and *kumbha* as also the *vīra-kaṇṭha* are octagonal. The extreme pilasters are tetragonal in section with square *padma-pīṭhas* at the bottom, a *madhya-bandha* at the centre of their shafts of the same type as on the pillars, the details completely worked in the northern pilaster, while they are lacking on the southern. The top of the shaft in each case has the same type of *padma-bandha* as in the pillars of the row. The *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha* and *kumbha* are four-sided as also the *vīra-kaṇṭha* on top. The corbels are similar to those in the front row and carry a beam of the same dimensions as on the façade. The doucene *valabhī* coming between two thinner *vājanas* is decorated into a *haṁsavari* with bold *haṁsas* on the front side, while on the inner side the decoration resembles that on the inner side over the front beam, with the difference that it is incomplete for a considerable length in the middle. This perhaps would confirm the suggestion that this peculiarly-designed frieze is a later innovation both here as well as in the Varāha-maṇḍapam. The front side of the *valabhī* over the façade of the *mahā-maṇḍapa* should have also been decorated with a *haṁsa*-frieze now hidden by the ceiling slabs of the structural Vijayanagara *maṇḍapa*.

The projected shrine is a model of the *garbha-gṛiha* of an *āyatāśra* or oblong *vimāna*. It has a moulded *adhishṭhāna* consisting of a *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, a *kaṇṭha* with two *kampa*-mouldings, one above and one below the *kaṇṭha*, and a *paṭṭikā* with a *prati* on top. The height of the whole *adhishṭhāna* is 2 ft. These *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings are turned in at the front corners and continued on the projected sides of the shrine and again deflected to run along the base of the exposed sections of the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* on the north and south turning forward to run along the side walls of the *ardha-* and *mahā-maṇḍapas*. On this shrine-front over the *adhishṭhāna* rise eight pilasters (*kuḍya-stambhas*), representing functional pillars, four on either side of the shrine-entrance. The pilasters are undifferentiated into base, shaft, capital or corbel, but are uniformly tetragonal from base to top carrying a plain beam directly over their tops. Over the beam, and running between the two *vājanas*, is again the doucene moulding of the *valabhī* decorated with the *haṁsa*-frieze, the birds with their necks craned inwards towards the central shrine. Where the projection of the shrine-front emerges from the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, at the corners are again pilasters of the same type. The *haṁsavari* also turns in to extend like the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings over the two sections of the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*. It, however, does not extend over the side walls of the *ardha-* and *mahā-maṇḍapas*. At the

corners, the *hamsas* are shown in their frontal aspects against a background of their spread-out plumage simulating peacocks. Over the *valabhī* runs a flexed *kapōta*, its lower surface well scooped-in to present a curved cornice. Externally, its brim is well-marked by a chisel-line and its outer curvature well-finished. Bold *kūḍu*-arches stand out at intervals; the total number in front is perhaps six, the central portion is obscured by the brick-work front enclosing the wooden door-frame of the shrine in worship. The same *kapōta* extends over the sections of the back wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and along the north and south side walls of the *ardha-* and *mahā-maṇḍapas* decorated by paired *kūḍus*. While the *kūḍus* of the *kapōta* over the shrine-front and the back walls of the *maṇḍapa* have human faces within, the *kūḍus* of the *kapōta* on the side walls of the *maṇḍapas* have either floral motifs (a circular lotus medallion) or are left blank. The *kapōta* too is not scooped under and the *valabhī* below is narrower than the *hamsa*-frieze along the back wall. This shows that these have been later finishes, perhaps in the time of Paramēśvaravarman, who appears to have inaugurated worship here and also completed the sculptures, particularly those on the north and south walls of the two *maṇḍapas*, viz. the two royal portrait groups, Brahmā and Gaṅgādhara. Judging from the fact that the *kūḍu*-arches are not finished on the southern end of the *maṇḍapa*, particularly the *mahā-maṇḍapa*, and do not correspond with the original *kūḍu*-arch of the back wall at the corner and taking the difference in size and ornamentation into consideration, there will be no doubt in calling them later work. The corners of the *kapōta* over the shrine-projection are decorated by scroll-work in imitation of the metal embossed *kōṇapaṭṭas*. Over the cornice runs a *vyālavari* with boldly carved *vyālas*, few in number and well spaced out. In contrast to this the *vyālas* over the *kapōta* of the two side walls of the *maṇḍapa* are also of slightly different workmanship, though not in size.

On either side of the shrine-entrance, which is about 6 ft. wide, and cut inside narrow niches between the adjoining pairs of pilasters are *dvāra-pālas*, both of them identical. The pilasters, four on each side of the shrine-front, enclose three niches between them totalling six in all. Of these three sets of niches on each side, the central one is wider than the flanking niches. In the two narrower niches of either set that flank the entrance are sculptured the *dvāra-pālas* mentioned above. They are almost facing front, their hands towards the shrine-entrance lifted up in adoration, while the other hand in each case is placed in *kaṭi*.

In the central panel on the northern side is a sculpture of Vishṇu standing over a *padmāsana* in *sama-bhaṅga* (pl. LIII A). Vishṇu is four-armed, the upper two holding the *prayōga-chakra* and *śaṅkha*, the lower right in *sūchi*, almost like *abhaya*, and the lower left in *kaṭi*. Below him on either side are two kneeling devotees in adoration.

The corresponding central panel on the southern side contains a sculpture of Hari-Hara, standing below a parasol also in *sama-bhaṅga* over a *padmāsana* (pl. LIII B). He is four-armed holding in the upper right a *paraśu*, in the upper left a *prayōga-chakra*, while the lower right is in *abhaya* and the lower left is in *kaṭi*, with two devotees below kneeling in adoration as in the Vishṇu panel and in the Trimurti cave-temple.

The extreme northern panel of the shrine-front shows a figure in graceful *tri-bhaṅga*, two-armed, the arm towards the shrine holding a flower while the other arm is in *kaṭi*. The head is shaded by a serpent hood with five heads. Perhaps it is a sculpture of Ādi-śēsha.

The corresponding extreme panel on the south is a similar figure in *tri-bhaṅga*, but without the serpent hood.

The two sections of the back wall on either side of the projecting shrine-front contain larger square panels, the panel on the north bearing Śrī-dēvī (pl. LIV A), very similar to that in the Varāha-maṇḍapam (p. 147). Seated (*pralamba-pāda*) on a full-blown lotus, her feet

are resting on the shelf of the lower outer petals of the same. Below it are shown large lotus-leaves and buds. She is two-armed, holding lotus-buds in both the hands. She wears a *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*, over a thick *jaṭābandha*, *patra-kuṇḍalas*, *kaṇṭha-hāra*, *svarṇa-vaikākshas*, *kaṅkaṇas* and *mañjīras*. On either side are two pairs of attendants who are celestial maidens, the two inner carrying pitchers of water. The two outer attendants are not touching the waist of the ladies in front as in the Varāha-maṇḍapam panel but stand a little away and hold something. The northern one holds a basket of flowers in her left hand and with the right hand is picking them out for *archana*. The southern one holds a lotus-bud by the stalk in her left hand and her right hand is in *kaṭaka*. Over them are two elephants, the lateral view of their front portions alone being shown. The northern one is shown lifting up a pot of water and inverting it over the head of Lakshmī, while the southern one grasps the pot of water held by the arms of the attendant below, preliminary to pouring it over the head of Lakshmī. On the whole, the sculpture here is of much finer workmanship.

On the southern side is Durgā (pl. LIV B), corresponding to the Durgā in the Varāha-maṇḍapam (p. 148) but differing from it in many respects. She is eight-armed standing in graceful *tri-bhaṅga*, quite unlike the Durgās in the stiffer attitude of *sama-bhaṅga* in the Varāha-maṇḍapam and Trimūrti cave-temple (p. 160), with her right leg bent at the knee and crossed behind the left, the straight left trampling over the head of Mahishāsura. She holds in three of her upper right hands *prayōga-chakra*, *khaḍga* and *ghaṇṭā* and in the corresponding left hands *śaṅkha*, *kēṭaka* and *dhanus*. The right front hand holds a cup, while her lower left hand is in *kaṭi* with a parrot (*līlā- śuka*) perching on her wrist and looking towards the cup. In this as well as in its *tri-bhaṅga* pose and the presence of eight arms and the buffalo head below this sculpture differs from that in the Varāha-maṇḍapam which is only four-armed and stands on *a padmāsana*.[1] Durgā wears a ribbon-like *kucha-bandha*, *svarṇa-vaikākshas kaṇṭha-hāras*, *patra-kuṇḍalas* in both ears and *jaṭā-makuṭa* on the head. On her wrists and ankles are *valayas* and *mañjīras*. Behind and to her right stands up the top portion or capital of a pillar or *stambha* and over its *phalaka* is a trident or *triśūla*, the whole representing a *śaktidhvaja* or *śūladhvaja*, as in the Vṛishabhāntika group at Śīyamaṅgalam. On either side of her head are two flying *gaṇas*, the one on the left holding a *chāmara* and the other on the right carrying a casket. At the extreme corners behind the flying *gaṇas* are the face of a lion on the north and the head of an antelope on the south as in the Varāha maṇḍapam. Below the flying *gaṇas* are standing two attendant maidens, the one to the right of Durgā holding a *vakra-khaḍga* (scimitar) and the one on the left holding a bow or *dhanus*. The weapons they hold recall the *dvra-pālikās* of the Kōṭikal-maṇḍapam shrine. Both of them are adorned like Durgā herself. Kneeling on either side at the bottom in front of these attendant maidens are two devotees; the one on the north wears a *jaṭā-bhāra*, the entire mass of hair tied up into a knot on top of the head. He wears *patra-kuṇḍalas* and holds in his left arm-pit a sheathed sword. His right hand is holding a small dagger and piercing his left palm resting on the bent up knee, a symbolic sacrifice similar to that found in the Durgā panel at Śiṅgavaram (p. 115). The devotee on the southern side also kneeling, wears the usual type of *jaṭā-bhāra*, with a top-knot, as seen in Pallava sculptures, his right hand in adoration and the left holding a lotus. The pose of Durgā, and the action of the devotee symbolically injuring himself by blood-letting (and not total beheading as in the Varāha-maṇḍapam and Draupadī-ratha) and other details as also the finer workmanship

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[1] The Durgā in the Trimūrti cave-temple, though eight-armed and standing on a buffalo-head, is in *sama-bhaṅga* and without the attendants. The Durgā panel inside the Draupadī-ratha with attendants and the three others without attendants on its outer walls are also in *sama-bhaṅga* and four-armed. While Durgā inside the Draupadī-ratha shrine stands on *padmāsana*, the completed ones outside stand on buffalo-heads instead.

recalls the similar Durgā group adjoining the façade of the Śiṅgavaram cave-temple of the Mahēndra-type attributed on stylistic grounds to the close of the reign of Māmalla or to the reign of Paramēśvara.[1] Thus, this and the Gaja-Lakshmī sculpture would also approximate to the same period.

The end walls of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and *mahā-maṇḍapa* are also panelled with sculptures. On the northern end wall of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* is the bas-relief figure of a king sitting in the *sukhāsana* pose on a simple *mañcha* with four legs shaped like those of a lion, suggesting a *siṁhāsana* (pl. LV A). His right hand is in *chin-mudrā* or *vyākhyā* and the left is clenched and placed on his left bent thigh. He wears a *kirīṭa-makuṭa*, a *hāra* round his neck and his ear-lobes are pendant on either side, borne down by the weight of the *kuṇḍalas*. On either side of him stand his two queens, both in diaphanous clothing. One wears it like a *vēshṭī* without a *kachcha* reaching the ankles (*āprapāda*) and the other wears it down to the knee (*jānudaghna*) tucked up between the legs. Both wear enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas*, *karaṇḍa-makuṭas*, *valayas* and *mañjīras*. The one to the king's right wears a *hāra* round her neck, while the other does not have it. There is an inscription in Pallava-Grantha on the lintel reading *Śrī-Simhaviṇṇa-pōttr-āthirājan*.

The corresponding niche on the southern end wall is another royal group (pl. LV B). Here the king stands and points with his right hand towards the central shrine or more probably the Durgā panel in *sūchi*, leading by his left hand his principal queen who follows behind. Behind her is another lady. While the principal queen is dressed in a *vēshṭi*-like garment going round both the legs up to the ankles (*āprapāda*), the second queen who follows wears diaphanous clothing tucked up in *kachcha* between the legs, looking almost nude. They both wear *kaṭi-bandhas*, *hāras* and enormous *patra-kuṇḍalas* in one of their lobed ears and *makara-valayas* or *makara-kuṇḍalas* at the tips of the pendant lobes of the other ear dangling below on the shoulders. The ear-ornaments are inter-changed in the case of the queens. Over this panel is inscribed a label *Śrī-Mahēndra-pōttr-āthirājan*.

The panel at the extreme north end of the *mahā-maṇḍapa* contains a beautiful sculpture of Śiva as Gaṅgādhara (pl. LVI A) with four arms, standing gracefully in *tri-bhaṅga*, his upper right holding out one of his tresses to receive Gaṅgā, who is shown as a woman coming down from the skies at the top west corner with her hands in *añjali*. His lower right is in *kaṭaka*, the upper left holds an *aksha-mālā*, while the lower left is in *kaṭi*. Over the *ūrudaghna* garment round his waist is wound a live serpent with its hood rearing up to his right. He wears a *vastra-yajñōpavīta*, a small *hāra* of beads (*rudrāksha*) round his neck, *patra-kuṇḍala* in his right ear and *makara-kuṇḍala* in his left and a *jaṭā-makuṭa* on the head.

In the corresponding panel on the south end of the *mahā-maṇḍapa* is shown Brahmā (pl. LVI B) standing in *sama-bhaṅga* over a *padmāsana* which is a semi-circular pedestal. Of his four faces, the front and two lateral faces only are shown in the bas-relief. Of the four arms, the upper right holds *aksha-mālā*, the lower right is in *kaṭi* in symmetry with the similar pose of Śiva opposite, the upper left holds a *padma* and the lower left is in *abhaya* which is rather unusual and obviously adopted here for symmetry. He wears a broad *vastra-yajñōpavīta* and his *vastra* reaches down to his ankles (*āprapāda*) with a central fold. Round his neck, he wears a thin *hāra* with three large beads in the centre. Both the ears of the front face are lobed, but do not contain any ear ornaments. Adorning his head is a *jaṭā-makuṭa*.

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[1] Perhaps this manual offering is the first step of the sacrificial ceremony of offering flesh from nine-parts of the body (*navakhaṇḍa*) before the final head-offering as narrated in the Mallam hero-stone inscription of Kampavarman Pallava. The rituals are detailed in the *Kālika-Purāṇa* ch. 79. See *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 106.

Besides the two inscriptions over the two panels, there is a longer inscription in three lines starting from almost the middle of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* and running along the floor towards the Mahēndra panel in very large florid Pallava-Grantha script. Again in front of the shrine on the floor are two lines of a Telugu inscription and further down a single line in Tamil.

The Pallava-Grantha inscription on the floor of the *maṇḍapa* in Sanskrit is the imprecatory verse[1] identical with those found as the concluding verses of Paramēśvaravarman's inscriptions in the Gaṇēśa-ratha and Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam, both dedicated to Śiva. It is also the same as that found in the Śaivaite cave-temple called the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam and is in the same large florid script. The reference to Rudra here is not appropriate enough, since the cave-temple was consecrated to Vishṇu. The verse curses six times those ' in whose hearts does not dwell Rudra, the deliverer from the walking on the evil path '. The inscription reads:—

1 *Dhik=tēshāṁ dhik=tēshāṁ punar=api dhig=dhig=dhig=astu dhik=tēshāṁ* [|*]
yēshan=na vasati hṛidayē
2 *Ku-patha-gati-vimōkshakō Rudraḥ* ||

The second long inscription over the niche to the south of the shrine-entrance is the oft-quoted verse enumerating the ten incarnations of Vishṇu.[2] This is the earliest epigraphical enumeration, which is interesting in that it excludes Kṛishṇa but includes Buddha in the ten *avatāras*:

Matsyaḥ Kūrmō Varāhaś-cha Nārasiṁhaś-cha Vāmana [*ḥ*] [|*]
Rāmō Rāmaś-cha Rāmaś-cha Buddha[*ḥ*] *Kalkī-cha tē daśa* (||*]

The two labels over the portrait sculptures read *Śrī Siṁhaviṇṇa-pōttr-āthirājan* and *Śrī Mahēndra-pōttrā-thirājan*[3] in Pallava-Grantha script. The former is engraved above the group of sculptures representing a king seated on a *siṁhāsana*-like stool and flanked by his two queens standing. On a consideration of the palaeography of this label, Krishna Sastri concluded that the king represented here was Narasiṁhavishṇu, the conqueror of Vātāpi.[4] Subsequent writers have, however, tried to identify him with Siṁhavishṇu, the father of Mahēndravarman I. But the name Paramēśvara-mahā-Varāha-Vishṇu-griham of the cave-temple would prove that it is connected with Paramēśvaravarman I. Since a portrait of Mahēndravarman in a standing posture is also found here pointing to his two queens the deity inside the cave, as if it has been his own work, it would indicate only that he too was connected with its excavation and the portrait would, therefore, represent Mahēndravarman II. If so, Paramēśvaravarman I, after whom the cave came to be called, must have completed the work after his predecessors, as is amply borne out by the stylistic and other details discussed above.[5] Thus, the perpetuation of the association of two of his immediate predecessors with the cave-temple seems to have been the intention of Paramēśvara in putting up their portraits on the side walls of the *ardha-maṇḍapa*,

[1] H. Krishna Sastri, *Two Statues of Pallava Kings and Five Pallava Inscriptions in a Rock Temple at Mahābalipuram*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India no. 26, pp. 7 ff.; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1922, no. 665; *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 117. The substitute *Vishṇu* for *Rudra* is not found here or in any of the other identical inscriptions or concluding verses as suggested in the last mentioned reference.

[2] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1922, no. 663; *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 116; text in *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1923, p. 94, and Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[3] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1922, nos. 661 and 662; *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, nos. 17 and 18; text in Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[4] Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[5] See also *South Indian Inscriptions*, XII, no. 17.

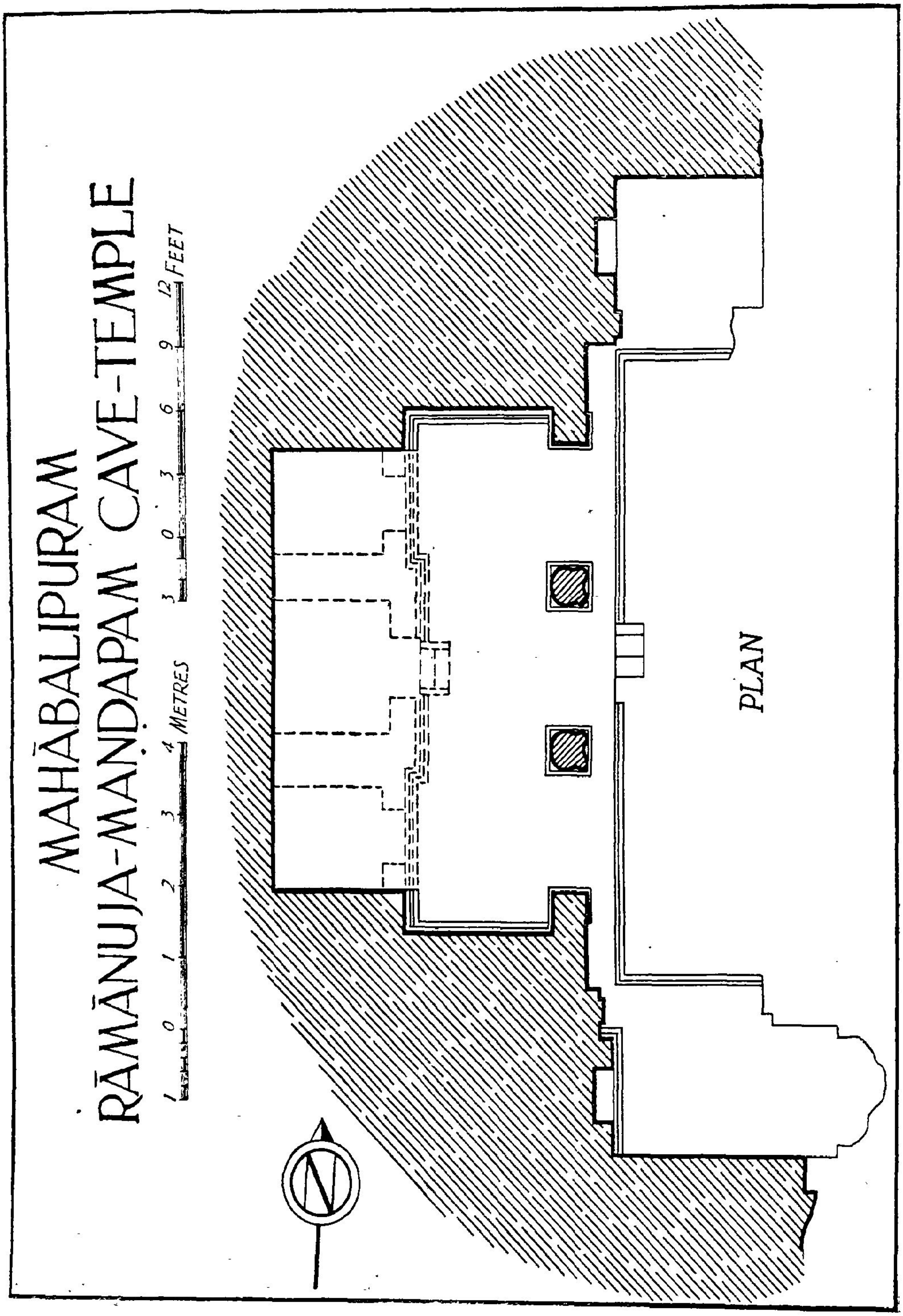
MAHĀBALIPURAM
RĀMĀNUJA-MAṆḌAPAM CAVE-TEMPLE
METRES
FEET
PLAN

Fig. 36

while he himself lent his own name to the cave-temple. The work apparently started late in the reign of Māmalla, as is indicated by the stylistic and other architectural features, was in progress during the short reign of Mahēndra II, and was completed early in the reign of Paramēśvara, who consecrated it. The architectural evidence amply confirms the epigraphical evidence and in the series this cave-temple will follow those of Māmalla and precede the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam excavated by Paramēśvara I.

Paramēśvara's strong prediliction to Śaivism is indicated by his dedication of the Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam, Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam and Gaṇēśa-ratha to Śiva as confirmed by the identical imprecatory verses on them and also by his consecration of the Dharmarāja-ratha to Śiva. The structural temple at Kūram was also dedicated to Śiva. The repetition of the Śaivite imprecation in a Vishṇu cave-temple, though inappropriate, would lead to the same conclusion and also imply that he was only instrumental in completing this Vaishṇavite cave-temple, commenced by his predecessors. That the intended dedication of this cave-temple was throughout to Vishṇu would be clear from the presence of the rare inscription enumerating the ten *avatāras* of Vishṇu and also from the name Paramēśvara-mahā-Varāha-Vishṇu-gṛiham, mentioned by a subsequent Chōḷa inscription.[1] In the other instance of his completion of a work of his predecessors, viz., the Dharmarāja-ratha, Paramēśvara named it after himself by his own inscription as Atyantakāma-Pallavēśvara gṛiham, a name identical with those of his two other creations viz., the Dharmarājamaṇḍapam and the Gaṇēśa-ratha. This was obviously because it was all the time intended to be a Śiva temple. As if to indicate his role as one who completed the Ādi-Varāha cave-temple and the Dharmarāja-ratha, he has carved the portrait sculptures of his predecessors with their names in the former case and the *birudas* of Māmalla and perhaps also a few of Mehēndra II in the first and second storeys (*mūla-* and *madhya-taḷas*) of the latter, reserving the completed top storey, where he consecrated Śiva as Sōmāskanda, for inscriptions referring to himself. The number and variety of monuments concerned, the hardness of the material and the time-factor involved, considered along with the shortness of the reigns would all warrant the conclusion that such works were spread over more than one reign.

Mahābalipuram: Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam cave-temple (fig. 36; pl. LVII)

In its original condition, it was the most-finished cave-temple in the whole series at Mahābalipuram. It is carved on the eastern scarp of a long whale-back boulder on top of the main hill almost at its centre. The boulder itself is superposed by another of about the same height and length, which incidentally limited the height of the excavation, particularly the elaboration over the *prastara* part of the façade. This is also a case where the bulging rock-face has been cut into from either side to give a uniform vertical scarp as a preparation for the excavation, as in the Varāha-maṇḍapam. The cutting is, therefore, more than 12 ft. at the base on the southern side, about 8 ft. on the north and about 2 ft. at the top, so that the nearest vertical face of maximum possible height could be utilized. The temple essentially consisted of a large rectangular *ardha-maṇḍapa* with one row of pillars on its façade and with three shrines behind.

On either side of the façade, on the side walls of the prepared rock-face are two model *vimānas*, complete from *upāna* to *stūpi*, with a square rock-platform in front of both projecting beyond the base-line of the *maṇḍapa* in between. These two platforms form the *upapīṭhas* with all the mouldings, viz., *jagati*, *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, and *prati*, all continuous with the *adhishṭhāna*-mouldings at the base of the façade of the main *maṇḍapa*. Thus,

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[1] H. Krishna Sastri (*op. cit.*, pp. 7-8) suggests the probability of the original dedication to Śiva as well on the strength of the imprecatory verse but leaves the question open.

while the main excavation has only an *adhishṭhāna*, the *vimāna*-models on either side have an *upapīṭha* and *adhishṭhāna*, the *adhishṭhāna* of the main excavation forming the *upapīṭha* of the *vimānas* in bas-relief.

From the top of the main *adhishṭhāna* and recessed to a distance equal to the width of the *kapōta* above is carved a row of two pillars and two pilasters, with three *aṅkaṇas* in between, forming the façade of the main excavation. At either extreme, beyond the pilaster, the vertical face of the rock affords space for two large *dvāra-pāla* bas-reliefs, which were totally chiselled off by later occupants when the Vaishṇavites converted the cave into a hall or Ramānujākūḍam, obliterating totally the original sculptures as well as the three inner shrines. The two pillars and the two pilasters are *vyāla*-based. While the *vyālas* of the pillars face front, those of the pilasters *in antis* face each other (north-south). Below the *vyāla*-bases of the pillars and pilasters are square plinths, which are *padma-pīthas*, 22 in. square. In the case of the pilasters, the shaft and the capital-members above are tetragonal in section, whereas in the two pillars they are octagonal. Right on top of these *vyālas* only the *mālāsthāna* and *padma-bandha* portions of the shafts are seen. The *padma-bandhas* are broad bands composed of a series of lotus-petals in the top row, a median broad band of scroll-work and lotus-medallions bound between two fillets of beads, while from the lower fillets hang down loops and tassels of the *mālāsthāna* merging with the manes of the *vyālas*. The *vyālas* are typical with three divaricating horn-like projections over the heads, sejant on their haunches. Over the *padma-bandha* are the usual capital-components, viz., *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kaṇṭha*, *kumbha*, and *vīra-kaṇṭha*, the *padma* and *phalaka* being absent as in the Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam and unlike the Varāha-maṇḍapam and Mahishamardinī cave-temple. The width of the pilasters and the diameter of the pillars are 15 in. The *pōtikās* have a curved profile with clearly-cut *taraṅga*-ornamentation and median *paṭṭa* decorated with *koḍikkarukku* (*patra-latā*), the width of the corbel being equal to the diameter of the pillar or the width of the pilaster.

Over the corbel runs the *uttira* of the same width as the corbel but of lesser height. Over the *uttira* comes a wider beam stepped up into two offsets, *valabhī* and *vājana* on the inside and with an ogee-face (*valabhī*) outside, on which is carved a *bhūtavari*. Such a complete *bhūtavari* is seen here for the first time in Pallava cave-temples, in which the *haṁsa-mālā* is more common. The *bhūtas* are twentyseven in number from end to end, two symmetrical rows of twelve each, leaving out the two end-*bhūtas*, which are reclining and supporting the *kapōta*, and the central large one with a pot-belly (*kumbhōdara*). The twelve *bhūtas* of each row on either side carry over their shoulders two enormous rope-like garlands falling in loops between them. The seventh *gaṇa* from the south end has an elephant-head, suggesting Gaṇapati as the leader of the *gaṇas*. This would perhaps be the earliest representation of Gaṇapati in Pallava times, and that too only as a *gaṇa* and not as one of the gods[1] to be given a place inside the *maṇḍapa* or shrine. The tenth *gaṇa* of the northern end has a bull face suggesting Nandi. The rest of the *gaṇas* have human faces. Over this *bhūta-mālā* decorating the *valabhī* project a number of curved brackets (*koḍuṅgai*) in imitation of wooden ribbing supporting the flexed *kapōta* above. This is again a feature seen in the Pallava cave-temples for the first time but is more common in the Chāḷukyan cave-temples. The projection of the *kapōta* is almost equal to that of the *adhishṭhāna* below and on its outer curved surface, this flexed cornice is ornamented with eight *kūḍus* arranged in pairs, each pair corresponding to the corbel-arms over the pillars and pilasters

[1]In Rājasiṁha's Shore temple Gaṇapati is shown inside the *kūḍus* and in the cloister of the Kailāsanātha. It is only in later Pallava temples and their contemporary Pāṇḍya and Mutturaiyar cave-temples that Gaṇēśa comes to occupy shrines and *maṇḍapas* taking an equal place with other deities. In view of this, the Gaṇēśa adjoining the Vallam cave of Mahēndra is a later addition (p. 64).

below. The edge of the *kapōta* is marked off by a line into a brim. These *kūḍu*-arches do not contain inside them the usual human faces but have in their place lotus-medallions filling the entire space. The arches themselves are adorned by similar lotuses. The shovel-like finial has not been cut out on their crest as in other instances, but were perhaps inserted, judging from the socket-holes for such insertion on their tops; the finials themselves are missing.

Over the *kapōta* runs a *vyāḷavari*, the *vyālas* not clearly cut; over it occurs a row of five *śālās* interconnected by four cloister-lengths or *hārāntara* of lesser width and height, also with wagon-top roofs. The *hārāntara* at the extreme ends have one *kshudra-nāsikā* each with prominent *kūḍu*-like arch, while the two middle lengths of the *hārāntara* which are of greater length have two *kshudra-nāsikās* each. It is interesting to note that the oblong space of these projecting *nāsikās* below their *kūḍu*-arches are filled by *jālakas* or other types of trellis-work to suggest that they are reproductions of *vātāyanas* or windows. While the *jālakas* (*palakaṇi*) fill up the *kshudra-nāsikās* of the connecting cloisters or *hārāntara*, a *svastika*-shaped trellis fills the central *alpa-nāsikās* of the *śālās* themselves. Each *śālā* coming right over the bay between the columns below has an oblong *bhitti* or *gala* showing on its top the ends of cross-joists supporting the wagon-top roof. The ends of similar cross-joists are found also below the coping-like curved roof of the *hārāntara* (which are thus really connecting cloisters), to which height the openings of the *nāsikās* rise. The arches of the *nāsikās* in front of the *śālās* are higher and contain the projecting ends of the internal timber-work, while the other intervening gable arches of the *hārāntara* contain circular lotus-designs. Like the *kūḍus* below, these *nāsikās* do not carry integral shovel-finials but have sockets for insertion of separate pieces. The ridges of the *śālās* as well as the *hārāntara* cloisters have socket-holes for *stūpis*. Each *śālā* appears to have had two *stūpis* on top over the ridge on either side of the frontal *alpa-nāsikā* finial and between the two shovel-finials on the crests of either end *tōraṇa*-arch. In the case of two extreme *hārāntara*-lengths containing only a single *kshudra-nāsikā*, there is provision only for two *stūpis* over the ridge in addition to the finial over the *kshudra-nāsikā*; while in the two cloisters adjoining the central *śālā*, having two *kshudra-nāsikās*, the number of *stūpi*-sockets are three over the ridge in addition to the two sockets for the shovel-finials of the *kshudra-nāsikās* themselves. In this *hāra*-line the outer ends of the two extreme *śālās* have not been completed. The height of the façade has been limited by the surmounting boulder above with a cleft in between which obviously prevented the cutting of integral *stūpis*. But the fact that the *stūpis* of the *hārāntara*-lengths and the shovel-finials of the *nāsikās* and *kūḍus* of the *kapōta* much below the level of the natural cleft are not integral but insertions recalls the practice of providing finials or *stūpis* at the end of the work followed even in the case of the monolithic *rathas*, which were brought to their present stages of completion in Paramēśvara's time.

In the same manner in which the *adhishṭhāna* of the *maṇḍapa* extends on either side below the *dvāra-pāla* niches at either end of the façade, the *kapōta*, *prastara* and *hāra* also extend to the same limits thereby giving rise to a row of five *śālās* in all, of which the inner three come over the three bays between the pillars and pilasters and the outer two come over the *dvāra-pāla* niches. This *āvaraṇa* with *śālās* is only an extension of the *hāra* of the first *taḷa* of the main *vimāna* in structural examples over the roof of the *maṇḍapa* in front, as in Vijayālayachōḻīśvaram, Dārāśuram, etc., (p. 156 and note).

Behind the façade of the pillars and pilasters is cut a large oblong *maṇḍapa* and on its hind wall again were originally cut three shrines, *garbha-gṛihas* of *vimānas* almost square in shape, the central one projecting about 2 ft. more into the front *maṇḍapa* than the two lateral shrines. The three had, however, a continuous *adhishṭhāna*, as could be judged by the remnants at either end. The *adhishṭhāna* consisted of the *upāna*, *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*,

kaṇṭha and *prati*. The shrines themselves were separated from each other by massive cross walls about 2 ft. 3 in. in thickness. The height of the *adhishṭhāna* from the ground-level was about 2 ft. All evidences of the *sōpānas* in front of the three shrines have been obliterated since the entire floor after the reduction of the *adhishṭhāna* of the three shrines has been made even with the general floor-level of the *maṇḍapa*. From the extant vestiges at either end over the remnants of the *adhishṭhāna*, one can easily infer that each shrine-front had four pilasters, two flanking the shrine-entrance and two cantoning the corners. The pilasters, as can be judged from the two extant examples at either end, had *padma-pīṭha* plinths, the shafts tetragonal in section throughout up to the *phalaka*; also the shafts were rather tall and slender, 3 in. wide. On top of each of the shafts is a short *padma-bandha* moulding followed by the *kalaśa*, *tāḍi*, *kumbha*, *padma*, *phalaka*, and *vīra-kaṇṭha*. The corbels on top were *taraṅga*-corbels with curved profile. The beam of the same width as the corbels was cut over them supporting a *valabhī* with *haṁsavari* which carried the flexed *kapōta* decorated by two *kūḍu*-arches for each shrine-front. The *kūḍu*-arches were cut complete with shovel-finials and human heads within, the tips of the finials touching the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* in front, and their rear cut out to show the receding terrace-mouldings behind. Over the *kapōta*-line still extant under the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* is cut the *vyāḷavari*, the *vyālas* shown almost in full aspect, particularly at the corners standing on their four legs and presenting their entire length, heads also turned front. Some of them, however, are shown in their frontal poses. There are thus two *vyālas* between the *kūḍus* of each lateral shrine, while in the case of the central shrine they are four, suggesting the corresponding number of terrace-joists. As in the corners at either end, there are two more *vyālas* at the places where the projecting beams cross on top of the central shrine.

On either side of the entrance to the shrine and cut into the niches formed between the flanking and cantoning pilaster of that side were *dvāra-pālas*, of which the faint outline of the one at the southernmost end are visible. Whether they were identical or different cannot be said. The shrine-entrances do not appear to have had jambs and lintels, but were framed only by the two flanking pilasters and the beam running over the corbels on top, as can be judged from the extant remains. Cut into the back-wall of the central shrine, at a height of about 2 ft. from its floor-level and occupying almost the entire space, is a shallow square niche of 5 ft. side. This contained originally a bas-relief of Sōmāskanda, as can be detected by the faint outlines that remain after the relief was chipped off by vandals and showing off, in contrast with the rest of the wall, as a mere darkened area. The parasol over Śiva and Umā and the faint outlines of two attendant deities on top are also visible. The Sōmāskanda group, unlike the bas-relief in the Mahishamardinī-maṇḍapam cave-temple, appears to have been seated directly on a low *siṁhāsana* without the bull below. There are remnants of old plaster (which was perhaps painted) on the ceiling of the central shrine as also on the ceilings of the two lateral shrines and their extant inner walls.

The two lateral shrines, however, do not show the niches on the back wall. This cave-temple was perhaps dedicated to Trimūrtis, the central shrine being that of Śiva or the three shrines contained three forms of Śiva.

The panels at either end wall of the *maṇḍapa* are bounded below by the *adhishṭhāna*-moulding and above by the *kapōta*, both mouldings continuous with similar ones of the three main shrines. The panels are also flanked by pilasters with all the capital-components and corbel on either side. The sculptures in both the panels have been chiselled off.[1]

[1] Judging from faint indications one can suppose that the southern panel contained a standing Durgā with attendants. Nothing can be said of the sculpture in the northern panel, where only remnants of a cloud are seen on the top left corner and a lion's leg at the bottom, perhaps the leg of a *siṁhāsana*, which probably had a figure seated on it.

Externally, on either side of the façade are the two fine models of *alpa-vimānas* with all the six *aṅgas* showing their frontal views with the cell measuring about 3 ft. square cut deep inside. Both the *vimānas* are identical except for one or two minor details of mouldings or ornamentation. The southern *vimāna* is more complete, in that it has its *adhishṭhāna* well-cut, whereas in the northern one the carved *adhishṭhāna* below the shrine has been totally chiselled off and the surface rendered uneven. The *adhishṭhāna* represents a model 5½ ft. square with a shrine about 4½ ft. square on top. The height of the *garbha-gṛiha* from *prati* to *prastara*, i.e., to the top of the *kapōta*, is again 4½ ft. The width of the *grīvā* is 2 ft. 3 in. and that of the *śikhara* 3 ft., the total height of the superstructure—*grīvā*, *śikhara* and *stūpi*—also being equal to about 3 ft. The *adhishṭhāna* is complete with *jagatī*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, *kaṇṭha* and *prati*. Recessed 15 in. from the edge of the *prati* is the square front end of the shrine which has two pilasters one at either extreme, tetragonal throughout and not having any capital-components and without even the corbel. The beam on top carries the *kapōta* with two *kūḍu*-arches in front, the arches having trifoliate finials in place of the shovel-heads. The arches are almost semi-circular and contain inside lotus-medallions. The corners of the *kapōta* are decorated by embossed scroll-work (*kōṇapaṭṭa*). Over the *kapōta* are seen the front ends of the two cross-beams and two joists between them which support the superstructure. These are joined across by the transverse frontal beam placed above them and its projecting ends terminate laterally in *makara*-heads. The fixture of the cross-beams and joists with the main beam is by means of scarf-joints. Over this joinery rises the *grīvā* on four short pilasters with a central *nāsikā* opening filled by floral work suggesting a window. Over the *grīvā* comes the four-sided curvilinear *śikhara*, its lower edge well-curved and splayed out and decorated at the corners by a long *koḍikkarukku* or *kōṇa-paṭṭa*, extending from the top to the brim. On the front face of the *śikhara* is shown the upper portion of the *nāsikā*, which is a *kūḍu*-arch having a shovel-finial characteristic of the Pallavas, and inside the arch is shown the projecting timber-work of the interior of the *śikhara*. On top, the *koḍikkarukku* creepers merge with a spread-out foliage-ornamentation, taking the place of the *mahā-padma*, at the centre of which is cut out the four-sided *stūpi*.

In the case of the northern model *vimāna*, the *nāsikā*-window is closed by a complex trellis-work of four *svastikas* meeting into a common larger *svastika* at the centre.

There are two inscriptions, one in three lines in florid Pallava-Grantha script on the floor between the two pillars of the façade, and another on the floor between the southern pillar and pilaster appearing to consist of four letters in the ordinary script of rather archaic variety. This appears to be a short label. The larger inscription[1] consists of the imprecatory verse found in the longer inscriptions of Paramēśvaravarman I in the Gaṇēśa-ratha and the Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam at Mahābalipuram and the shorter one in Ādi-Varāha cave-temple. It reads:

1 [*Śrī*] (*ḥ** I I*) [*Dhi*]*k=tēsh*[*ām*] *dhik-tē*[*shām*] *punar api dhig=dhig=dhig=astu dhik=tē-*
2 *shām* [I*] *yēshān=na vasati hṛidayē. ku-patha-gati*
3 *vimōkshakō Rudraḥ* I I

'Six times cursed be those in whose hearts does not dwell Rudra (Śiva), the deliverer from the walking on the evil path'.

It is, therefore, clear that as in the Gaṇēśa-ratha and Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam, this cave-temple was excavated by Paramēśvaravarman and was dedicated to Śiva. This is also amply borne out by the advanced architectural features noticed above.

[1] *South Indian Inscriptions*, I, no. 20; XII, no. 22; *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1907, no. 533; *Epigraphia Indica*, X, p. 11.

The Vaishṇavas, who cut off the three central shrines to extend the *maṇḍapa* and also all the bas-reliefs appear to have added a front *maṇḍapa* supported on six crudely-cut pillars with the slabs of the side walls fitted into the footings cut on the sloping rock on either side. An additional flight of steps on the southern side gave access to the top of this *maṇḍapa*. The terrace as well as the side walls of this *maṇḍapa* are now gone. Only the six pillars with their crude corbels and the massive beams stand obliterating the clear view of the cave temple.

Śāḷuvaṅkuppam: Yāḷi-maṇḍapam (Tiger-cave) (fig. 37; pl. LVIII)

This excavation at Śāḷuvaṅkuppam near Mahābalipuram is more a rock-cut pavilion or *maṇḍapa* of a peculiarly ornamental type than a shrine (pl. LVIII A). This is just an oblong pavilion or *maṇḍapa* closed on three sides, cut out of the front face of a convenient boulder facing the sea. The floor-level of the *maṇḍapa* is cut at a height of about 6 ft. from ground-level in front, with a flight of four rock-cut steps, projecting in front with parapets on either side, the lowermost step of which is a *chandra-śilā*, 2 ft. above ground-level. On either side of the parapet are two rough-cut forms of rampant lions facing out. Behind the *sōpāna*, the plinth of the *maṇḍapa* on either side is cut into a well-defined *adhishṭhāna* consisting of an *upāna*, *padma*, *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, *kaṇṭha*, *paṭṭikā* and *prati*. Projecting in front of the *kaṇṭha* and *paṭṭikā* mouldings are the ends of four cross-beams, at the corners of the *adhishṭhāna* on either side of the *sōpāna*, the *paṭṭikā* itself being really the front transverse beam scarfed on joints with the lateral longitudinal beams, the whole suggesting the timber-work of the base of a wooden structure or pavilion set on a masonry platform formed by the *upāna*, *padma* and *kumuda*.

At either corner are cut out two massive pillars also unfinished showing rampant lions leaping forward with riders on looking as if they are fitted on top of the basal frame at its corners. The apices of these pillars have been roughly shaped with a fairly distinct *phalaka*-moulding on top, indicating that the capital-members, faintly indicated also by the outline of the *kalaśa*, were intended to be cut out or have been worn out by the saline air. On top over the *vīra-kaṇṭha* are placed cross-corbels carrying roof-beams, likewise crossing each other over scarf-joints and projecting beyond the corners. Above this beam or *uttira* is a *vājana*-moulding and above it the under surface of the projecting *kapōta* is left even and not scooped into, while externally its curvature is distinctly shown with two roughly-cut *kūḍus* near either end and inside the pillar-line. Over the *kapōta* is shown the roughly-cut members—the *āliṅga* and *antarī* without any details, forming the terrace or roof. The depth of the cell or *maṇḍapa* inside is about 4 ft. and its height about 6 ft. As such it is hardly more than a deep niche or alcove. In order to throw out this pavilion into relief, the rock all round was scooped out deeper, particularly on either side, where two oblong niches, also unfinished with an indication of a *kapōta* on top in line with that of the main cell, were cut. Around these, taking advantage of the external sloping contours and semi-circular or bun shape of the rock-face, a *tōraṇa* of boldly cut out *vyāla*-heads, eleven in number, were carved out, forming an incomplete elliptical arch all round the *maṇḍapa* enclosing the two side niches also in its sweep. The animals so carved out are *vyālas* and not lions or tigers as suggested by some. While the top three show frontal aspects of the face, the lateral ones, four on each side, show profiles of the heads.

There has been no attempt to carve a cell at the back wall of this small pavilion; nor is there any indication to show that it was intended. It has been surmised that this cave was originally intended to be dedicated to Durgā, judging from its association with the *vyāla-tōraṇa* or frieze and the lion-pillars. These are not themselves quite sufficient to warrant such a surmise.

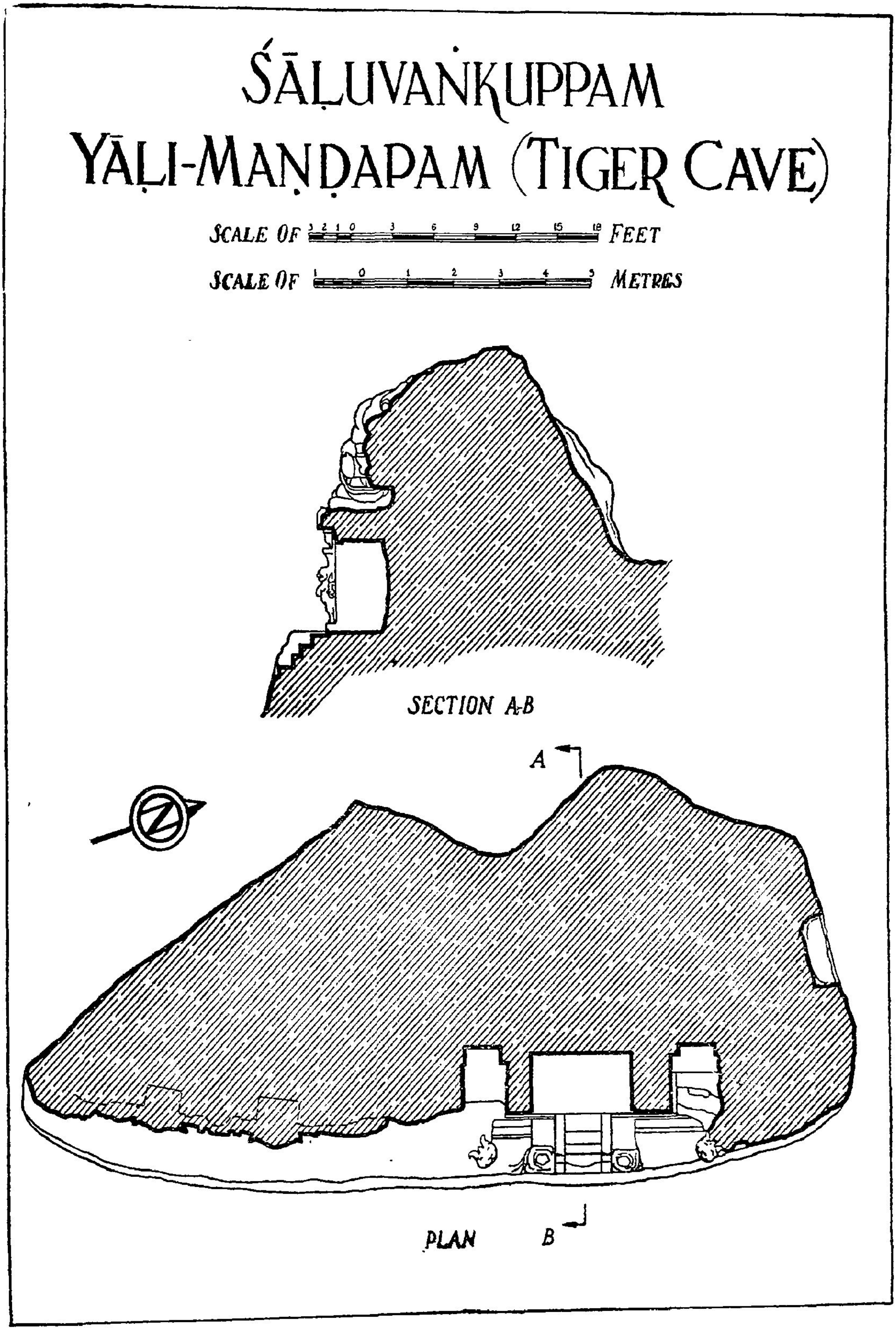
ŚĀLUVANKUPPAM
YĀLI-MAṆḌAPAM (TIGER CAVE)
SCALE OF FEET
SCALE OF METRES
SECTION A-B
A
PLAN
B

FIG. 37

In the small southern extension of the boulder are cut the frontals of two large elephants with coiled trunks, bold tusks and fanning ears (pl. LVIII B). Even these details are not cut to the finish, and they too have been much corroded by saline action. As if carried by the elephants, like *howdahs* over their necks, are cut two horseshoe-shaped arches each with a deep oblong cell inside. The back wall of these cells contain crudely-cut and much worn-out figures of a four-armed god seated holding what appears to be *śakti* or *vajra* in one of the hands. They may both be representations of Indra or one of them may be Indra and the other Skanda, because both of them have elephant-*vāhanas* and Skanda was also a particular favourite of the Pallavas. In between the two elephants are cut the rough outlines of a *stambha* or pillar with tetragonal shaft and circular capital with a bulbous *kumbha* on top. Projecting beyond it is a square *phalaka* with *padma* below and perhaps a *pōtikā* over a *vīra-kaṇṭha* above, which is not quite clear in its present broken and worn-out state. To the south of the two elephants carrying the *howdahs* and occupying the rest of the space is an unfinished figure of a pony, its outlines crudely cut. A similar association of elephant with *howdah* with a deity inside and a horse beside is found carved on a rock to the south of the Shore temple, which compares well with this representation.

Judging from the general style of the *vyālas* as also from the presence of the lion-pillars with rampant or rearing lions, and the proximity of this to the Atiraṇachaṇḍa cave-temple of Rājasiṁha, this excavation is to be attributed to Rājasiṁha. The fact that there is a smaller representation of the *Yāḷi-maṇḍapa* and an elephant with *howdah* with a horse beside near the Shore temple, also built by Rājasiṁha, would confirm this.

The local name *Yāḷi-maṇḍapa* (*Vyāla-maṇḍapa*) is more appropriate than such fanciful names as 'Tiger-headed cave', 'lion cave' etc.

On the northern face of the same boulder has been roughly cut out the head of a large lion and below it, corresponding to its body, an oblong niche. The idea was perhaps to carve out a lion with a niche in its chest. Similar sejant lions with niches in their bosoms are found near the Shore temple of Rājasiṁha and these niches contain sculptures of Durgā as Mahishāsuramardinī. Perhaps this was also one of the reasons why the pavilion-like *maṇḍapa* was supposed to have been intended for Durgā. But all the associations, particularly the elephants with Indra on one of them, the proximity of the sea, which this excavation faces, and the *kīrti* or *dhvaja-stambha* (*Indra-dhvaja*) between the two elephants, are strongly reminiscent of the Indra festival, so common and popular in the Tamil country, particularly in the port-towns as Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṇam. In the *Śilappadikāram*, the first canto in two of its *gāthās*[1] describe in detail the Indra festival and the accompanying mass bathing in the sea. The details given there would strongly support such an identification. This excavation, therefore, is nothing more than an *utsava-maṇḍapa*, where the processional deity, Indra or Indra-dhvaja, was brought and placed during the festival on the sea-shore, or from where the king watched the festival. Such festivals conducted by the king are also mentioned in the *Samarāṅgana-sūtradhāra*[2] of king Bhōja, though not so vividly as in the *Śilappadikāram*. A later Tamil inscription in the vicinity of this present fishing-hamlet, 2 miles north of Mahābalipuram on the sea, refers to this place as Tiru-veḷuchchil[3], which means the place

[1] *Śilappadikāram* Canto I, *Puhār-kāṇḍam*, *gāthās* 5 and 6 *Indra-viḷavu-ūr-eḍutta-kāthai*, and *kaḍal āḍu-kāthai*.

[2] Edited by T. Ganpati Sastri, Gaekwad Oriental Series, XXV, Baroda (1924), chapter XVII, pp. 70-86; see also *Mahābhārata*, *Ādiparva*, chapter 64; *Vishṇu-Purāṇa*, pt. V chapter 10. *Kālakāchāryakathā*, ed. by W. N. Brown (1933), p. 83; also *Vīramitrōdaya* (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series VI, 1916, Benaras) pp. 421, ff.

[3] *South Indian Inscriptions*, IV, no. 381; also *ibid* nos. 377, and 378, from the Ādi-Varāha Cave-temple at Mahābalipuram, which refer to this place.

where divine or holy processions were conducted, or which the king graced by his royal presence (camped). Such a place will be appropriately Tiruveḷuchchil or Tiruveḷuchchilūr or Tiruveḷuchchiyūr, forming part of the port-city of Mahābalipuram.

Mahābalipuram: the smaller Yāḷi-maṇḍapam

The Yāḷi-maṇḍapam of Śāḷuvaṉkuppam is reproduced wholly on a smaller scale or in parts on the rocks near the Shore temple at Mahābalipuram.

The smaller Yāḷi-maṇḍapam is carved on one of the surf-beaten group of rocks to the south of the Shore temple. On the western face of this rock is a smaller replica of the Yāḷi-maṇḍapam at Tiruveḷuchchiyūr or Śāḷuvaṉkuppam, consisting of a small niche surrounded by a *vyāla-tōraṇa*. Another rock, called the Durgā rock, which has been itself shaped out in the form a recumbent lion, has on its east face an elephant-head with a *howdah* over it, containing the figure of Indra, and at the opposite end is shown a trotting pony, and also a few attendant figures.

Mahābalipuram: Mahishāsura rock-cut cell

Situated on the surf-line, to the north of the Shore temple, is the largest of this group. On its eastern face is cut a small cell, and carved on its hind wall is a bas-relief of eight-armed Durgā. Flanking the entrance to the cell are lion-based pilasters and panels of decayed *dvāra-pālikās*. Two socket-holes on the platform in front would indicate structural additions. Its northern face has a crudely-carved lion in relief mauling Mahishāsura.

Perhaps the site near the Shore temple at Mahābalipuram was the place of earlier festivals as the sea-shore of Kavērippaṭṭiṉam was, and it shifted to Śāḷuvaṉkuppam in the time of Rājasiṁha, when the place assumed the special name of Tiruveḷūchchiyūr.

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GLOSSARY OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

adhishṭhāna: basement of a *vimāna*, *maṇḍapa* or similar structure forming a distinct architectural feature supporting walls and pilasters or pillars and consisting of distinct moulded tiers, e.g. *upāna*, *jagatī*, *kumuda*, *kaṇṭha* and *paṭṭikā*.

āliṅga, *āliṅgana*, *āliṅgana-paṭṭikā:* one of the two mouldings, *āliṅga* and *antarita* over the *kapōta* similar to a 'blocking-course'.

alpa-nāsikā: projected front-end of an apsidal shrine resembling a *kūḍu*-arch over pilasters, originally functioning as a small opening or fenestrated window, usually in *kūṭas*, *kōshṭhas* and *pañjaras*.

alpa-vimāna: small one-storeyed *vimāna*. The parts are: *adhishṭāna*, *bhitti* or *pāda*, *prastara*, *grivā*, *śikhara and stūpi*.

aṅkaṇa: bay or intercolumniation between pillars or space between pillars and pilasters.

antarāla, *antarāla-maṇḍapa:* intermediate passage or room between outer *maṇḍapa* and shrine.

antarī: a recessed moulding acting as intermediary.

antarita: see *āliṅga*.

ardha-maṇḍapa: a pillared hall immediately in front of the principal shrine or distal half of a *maṇḍapa* with two seriate pillars, as in rock-cut cave-temples.

avalambana: eaves-projection.

āvuḍaiyār (Tamil): base or *pīṭha* of the *liṅga*.

āyatana: shrine, *vimāna*.

āyatāśra-vimāna: *vimāna* oblong on plan and covered by a wagon-top roof.

bhadra-pīṭha: a kind of moulded pedestal usually of the *mañcha* variety, circular or rectilinear on plan and without the *kumuda*-moulding.

bhadra-śālā: oblong wagon-topped miniature shrine of *āyatāśra* type in the centre of each side of the *hāra* over the storeys of the *vimāna*.

bhitti: wall.

bhitti-tōraṇa: ornamental festoon on the wall, usually a *makara-tōraṇa*, supported by two pilasters. See *tōraṇa*, *makara-tōraṇa*.

bhūta: 'goblin'.

bhūta-mālā, *bhūta-vari:* decorative frieze with *bhūtas*, usually below the flexed cornice in the *valabhī* or eaves-board, marking the decorated ends of the joists over the main beams.

chandra-śālā: open court, usually over terrace, surrounded by cloisters connecting *kūṭas* and *śālās*. Tamil *nilā-muṟṟam*.

chandra-śilā: lowest step in the *sōpāna*, shaped like half-moon.

chaturmukha: a type of shrine or *vimāna* with opening on all the four sides.

chitra-pōtikā: corbels with embossed carving or painting of creepers, flowers, etc.

dēva-koshṭha: niche of exterior shrine-wall enshrining the deity.

dhāma: shrine or *vimāna*.

gaja-makara: an *īhā-mṛiga* motif depicting the combination of a crocodile (*makara*) and elephant, usually the upper snout of the *makara* extended into the coiled proboscis of the elephant.

gala, *grīvā:* 'neck'; usually the clerestory raising up the roof (*śikhara*) with light- and air-openings (*nāsikās*) on its sides.

garbha-gṛiha: shrine-cell or *sanctum sanctorum*.

ghana-dvāra: false doorway usually depicted on the other walls of the *vimāna*, the functional door being on the principal side.

gōpura: main gateway; the storeyed structure over entrance or entrances through the enclosing walls to the premises of a temple, palace or city.

haṁsa-mālā, haṁsa-vari: decorative frieze of *haṁsas* (geese) above the principal beams of the shrine and below the cornice of the main shrine-walls or *talas* (storeys) and on top of the *grīvā* below the *avalambana* of the *śikhara.*

hāra: string of miniature shrines over each terrace (*tala*) of the storeyed *vimāna* consisting of *kūṭas, kōshṭhas* or *śālās* and *pañjaras* interconnected by cloister-lengths or in its place balustrades simulating cloisters (*hārāntara*).

hārāntara: see *hāra.*

īhā-mṛiga: fanciful animal, sometimes composite.

jagatī: vertical moulding of the *adhishṭhāna* immediately above the *upāna*, oblong in shape and in a line with the vertical norm or *māna-sūtra* (main plumb).

jālaka: window with net- or trellis-work of different patterns.

kāl (Tamil): shaft of a column, the portion between the base or plinth (*ōma*) and the capital.

kalaśa: wide-mouthed vase; lowermost member of the pillar-capital, so called after its shape.

kampa: projected moulding of a minor order similar to 'fillet'- or 'reglet'-like moulding separating a *fascia* or two major mouldings.

kaṇṭha: 'neck'; the major recessed moulding of the basement, oblong in elevation, connecting or separating other projected mouldings, viz. the *paṭṭikā* above and the lower mouldings of the *adhishṭhāna* like the *kumuda* and *padma.* It is invariably bounded by two *kampa*-mouldings.

kapōta: 'dove', 'pigeon'; overhanging cornice, usually flexed, projecting beyond the principal beam to throw off water from the terrace beyond the beam and joist-end; the recesses between the joist-ends over the wall, harbouring birds protected by the projecting curved cornice. Hence perhaps *kapōta-pālikā* is also equated with the small arched opening in the cornice-lines. See *kūḍu.*

kapōta-pālikā: see *kapōta.*

kari-makara: same as *gaja-makara.*

karṇa-kūṭa: miniature *sama-chaturaśra* (square) shrine at the corner of each storey of the *vimāna* over the *prastara*, with a single *stūpī.* It is rarely *vṛitta* (circular) on plan.

karṇa-śālā: miniature *āyatāśra* (oblong) shrine with barrel-vault roof placed at the corner of each *tala* of a structure, usual in *gōpuras.*

kaṭṭu (Tamil): intervening octagonal or polygonal portion between the bottom and top squares of a pillar.

koḍikkarukku (Tamil): embossed lotus or meandering creeper design. Same as *patra-latā* or *padma-rēkhā.*

koḍuṅgai (Tamil): 'bent arm'; curved bracket or eaves-bracket supporting cornice (as in original metal sheet or wooden plank cornices) or the projected eaves of the *śikhara* or roof (*avalambana*).

kōṇa-paṭṭa: ridge-plate, joining the adjacent edges (ribs) particularly of metal sheet or wooden plank *śikharas* or *kapōtas* at the corner-junctions.

kōshṭha: same as a *śālā.*

kshudra-nāsikā: short *nāsikā*; projected front-end of a miniature apsidal, (one- or two-storeyed) shrine with arch over pilasters functioning as a small opening, usually found in the *hārāntara.*

kshudra-vimāna: miniature *vimāna* of small dimensions of two, three or four storeys or *talas.*

kūḍu (Tamil): 'nest'; an arched or horseshoe-shaped opening projected out of the flexed cornice (*kapōta*), originally perhaps intended for entry of roosting birds (*kapōta*) but in later examples filled with human figures (*mithuna*, etc.) surmounted by a finial of diverse shape. The arch is usually a *makara-tōraṇa.*

kuḍya-stambha: pilaster shown as relief on wall-surface.

kumbha: a member of the pillar-capital coming above the *kalaśa* and *tāḍi*, flat and bulbous in form originally a flattened carinated vase with a short, narrow mouth.

kumuda: three-faceted (*tri-paṭṭa*) or circular (*vṛitta*) polygonal or fluted (*suṇḍōbhēda*) 'torus'-like moulding of the *adhishṭhāna* coming over the vertical *jagatī* and projected up to the vertical norm (*māna-sūtra*).

kūṭa: shrine of square plan (*sama-chaturaśra*) with four-sided converging roof and single finial, or circular with domical roof and single finial or *stūpi*.

lalāṭa-bimba: 'crest-figure'; chief decorative motif or figure on the frontal of any entrance or the door-lintel, sometimes extending to the overdoor.

māḍakkōvil (Tamil): a storeyed palace, mansion or shrine.

madhya-bandha, madhya-paṭṭa: raised floral or decorated band at the middle of the height of the pillar-shaft.

mahā-maṇḍapa: pillared hall immediately in front of the *ardha-maṇḍapa* or *antarāla* or the proximal half of a *maṇḍapa* with two seriate pillars, closed or open, in cave-temples.

mahā-nāsikā: the projected (nose-like) part from the sides of the *grīvā* and *śikhara* showing the frontal aspects of apsidal *vimānas* and having pillars with surmounting arched *tōraṇas*.

makara-tōraṇa: an entrance-decoration or decorated gateway with a festoon straight or arched spanning the tops of two columns, the festoon or *tōraṇa* being a decorative garland or scroll issuing from mouths of *makaras* (crocodiles), placed over the capitals of the supporting *stambhas*. Such *makara-tōraṇas* are found over the *dēva-kōshṭhas* or shrine- or *maṇḍapa*-entrances or walls (*bhitti-tōraṇa*).

makara-pōtikā: corbel carved like a *makara*.

mālā-sthāna: apex of pillar or pilaster shaft below capital with looped garland (*mālā*) hanging from the *padma bandha*.

mañcha: a type of basement (*adhishṭhāna*) without the *kumuda*, having *upāna*, *kaṇṭha* and *paṭṭikā* and other mouldings.

maṇḍapa, maṇḍakam (Tamil): open or closed pillared hall.

masūraka: basement. Same as *adhishṭhāna*.

mātaṅga-nakra: a decorative motif, combination of elephant and *makara*, an *īhā-mṛiga*.

mukha-maṇḍapa: the first or frontal *maṇḍapa* of a series of *maṇḍapas* at the entrance of a temple, often synonymous with *mahā-maṇḍapa* in earlier temples.

mukta-sara: a pearl-garland or string of pearls used as a decorative motif.

nāla: chute or channel, water-spout; the projecting gargoyle-like spout at the base of the wall or top of the *adhishṭhāna* of the shrine serving as an outlet for *abhishēka*-water. Same as *praṇāla*.

nāsikā: (nose) projected arched opening (window). See *alpa-nāsikā, kshudra-nāsikā, mahā-nāsikā*.

nava-raṅga: closed or open *mahā-maṇḍapa* with four central and twelve peripheral pillars, of which eight are disposed in line with the central ones and four in the diagonal lines at the corners enclosing nine *aṅkaṇas*, usual in temples of the Chāḷukyan variety.

nīḍa: miniature apsidal shrine. Same as *pañjara*.

ōma: basal *pīṭha* of pillar or pilaster.

pāda: pillar (*stambha*).

paḍai (Tamil): tier or course of similar mouldings e.g. *uttira-paḍai, kumuda-paḍai, jagati-paḍai*, etc.

padma: lotus; capital-member (doucene) below the *phalaka* (abacus) shaped like a lotus with petals.

padma-bandha: broad fillet, ringing the top of the shaft of a pillar, marked by decorative bands between rows of lotus-petals, separating the shaft from the capital.

padma-pīṭha: lotus-shaped pedestal, consisting of a prominent *padma*-moulding over the *jagatī* or *upāna*, the torus forming the *vājana* on top.

pāli: Capital member, same as *padma* but without scalloped petals.

pañjara: miniature apsidal shrine. Same as *nīḍa*.

patra-latā: meandering creeper-design or scroll. Same as *koḍikkarukku*.

paṭṭa: plain or decorated band occupying the median face of the corbel as if binding the rolls or *taraṅga*-mouldings of the corbel.

paṭṭikā: projected top slab of the platform or *adhishṭhāna* in a line with the vertical norm or *māna-sūtra*, a major moulding of considerable thickness.

phalaka: abacus; wide plank on top of the terminal *śaduram* or capital of pillar supporting the corbel or *pōtikā*.

pīṭha: pedestal, base.

pōtikā: corbel-bracket over pillar. See *taraṅga-pōtikā, makara-pōtikā, chitra-pōtikā.*

praṇāla: same as *nāla.*

prastara: entablature, consisting of the mouldings over the walls and pillars, viz. the *uttira* (beam), *vājana, valabhī, kapōta, āliṅga* and *antarī.*

prati: platform; crowning moulding of the *adhishṭhāna*, above the *paṭṭikā* at the base of the wall and indicating the level of the floor inside the structure.

ratha: 'chariot'; monolithic *vimāna.*

śaduram (Tamil): square basal, intermediate or terminal section of a pillar separated by octagonal, polygonal or circular intermediary parts.

śakti-dhvaja: flat shovel-shaped finial of the *kūḍu* or *nāsikā* with two small *karṇas* (lugs) at its base.

śālā: shrine (*vimāna*) of *āyatāśra* type (oblong on plan) with barrel-vault roof with a series of *stūpis* on its ridge.

śālā-śikhara: *śikhara* peculiar to *śālā*-shrines, barrel-vault, wagon-top or inverted keel-shaped.

śikhara: roof of the *vimāna*, domical or four-sided with single finial, vaulted with many finials on the ridge or apsidal with many finials over the horizontal part of ridge.

siṁha-lalāṭa: lion-faced decorative motif or crest.

stambha: pillar (*pāda*).

stambha-tōraṇa: an entrance decoration or a free-standing decorated entrance without doors and with a festoon spanning the tops of two columns, the festoon primarily being a garland of leaves and flowers, later on taking the form of one or more curved and decorated cross-bars, or a floral and foliar festoon issuing out of *makara*-heads, placed on top of the supporting columns.

stūpi, stūpikā: finial, morphologically the *ushṇīsha* taking in later times the form of a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* or *pūrṇa-kumbha*, forming the topmost or ultimate member of the *vimāna, gōpura* or any other structure.

śuṇḍobhēda: like split bamboo or reed, fluted.

suruḷyāḷi (Tamil): *makara* or *vyāla* with long proboscis forming the coping of the parapet of the *sōpāna* with a terminal curl of the trunk.

tāḍi (Tamil): cushion-shaped capital-member above the *kalaśa* and below the *kumbha.*

tala: storey of the *vimāna* or *gōpura.*

taḷi (Tamil): excavated cave-tomb, subsequently used to denote a cave-temple or structural shrine.

taraṅga: 'wave'; wavy roll-ornament of the corbel resembling the 'reed'-moulding or 'reeding' of European classical architecture.

taraṅga-pōtikā: corbel-bracket with roll- or *taraṅga*-moulding.

tōraṇa: free-standing ornamental foliar and floral festoon forming an entrance supported by two upright columns and often interlaced vertically (*jāla-tōraṇa*), copied in wood and stone with greater elaboration and carving or taking the form of a *makara-tōraṇa*, mounted on two pillars. It precedes the main gateways (*gōpuras*) of cities, palaces and temples. It is often erected temporarily (as is common in south India) on festive occasions on roads leading to cities, palaces and temples. When adorning the doorway as a *dvāra-śōbhā*, it is called a *gṛiha-dvāra-tōraṇa* or the face of a wall (*bhitti-tōraṇa*), where it often frames a niche or *dēva-kōshṭha* or suggests an opening *ghana-dvāra.* When free-standing, it is designated *stambha-tōraṇa.*

torana-stambha: pillar or pilaster supporting a *torana.*

trikūṭa, trikūṭāchala: three *vimānas* connected by a common *adhishṭhāna* in a line or placed round a common *maṇḍapa,* as in the Chālukyan types.

tri-paṭṭa: three-faceted.

upāna: lowermost part or footing of the basement or *adhishṭhāna,* projecting beyond the vertical norm and surmounted by the *jagatī.* It forms the lowermost visible part of the *vimāna,* the uppermost limit of the same being the *stūpi.*

upapīṭha: an additional moulded platform or sub-base below the basement or *adhishṭhāna,* eth mouldings repeating those of the *adhishṭhāna* or often reduced in number or simpler.

utsava-maṇḍapa: maṇḍapa or pillared hall where the processional deity is brought and placed during festivals.

uttira: principal beam.

uttira-paḍai (Tamil): beam (*uttira*) tier.

vājana: a top course of the *adhishṭhāna,* often replacing the *paṭṭikā* and a thinner or less projected member than the *paṭṭikā.* In the entablature (*prastara*) a projecting member over the principal beam (and below the ceiling) with a similar member below the *kapōta* bounding the *valabhī* in between. It represents plank a thinner but wider than the *uttira* in timber structures.

valabhī: a convex sometims concave moulding below the cornice and above the beam bounded above and below by *vājana*-courses, filling the interspaces between the joists and often decorated by *bhūtas* or *haṁsas,* which are the carved ends of the joists.

vātāyanā: window.

vēdika: railing.

vimāna: the shrine from *upana* to *stūpi* (base to finial); a whole shrine from *upāna* to *stūpi,* consisting of *adhishṭhāna* (basement), *pāda* (pillars) or *bhitti* (walls), *prastara* (entablature), *grīva* (neck or clerestory), *śikhara* (head or roof), and *stūpi* (finial) in the case of simple *vimānas* (*ēkataḷa*) and with *talas* (storeys) intervening between the lowermost *prastara* below and the *grīva, śikhara* and *stūpi* above in storeyed *vimānas.*

vīra-kaṇṭha: peg or rod projecting from the centre of the top of the pillar-shaft running through the capital-components, viz., *kalaśa, tāḍi, kumbha, padma* or *pāli* and *phalaka* and inserted tenon-like into the base of the *pōtikā* or corbel.

viṭaṅka: same as *kūḍu.*

vyāla: leonine *īhā-mṛiga.*

vyāla-māla, vyāḷa-vari: decorative frieze with *vyālas* usually as a part of the *adhishṭhāna* and on top of the entablature of each *tala,* marking the ends of the cross-joints in original timber-work.

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PLATES

PLATE I

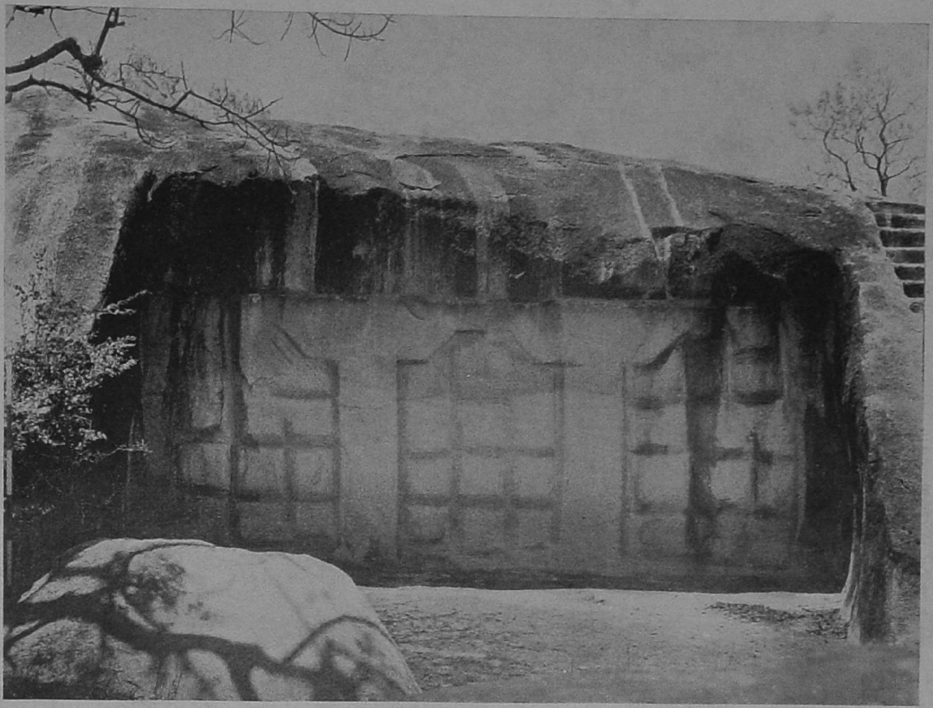
A

Mahābalipuram: rock opposite Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam, showing technique of excavation of a cave-temple. Note the cut-back scarp with columns and beam marked and intervening spaces grooved into square blocks to be chiselled off

B

Mahābalipuram: rock below lighthouse, showing advanced stage of excavation of a cave-temple

See page 26



A

B

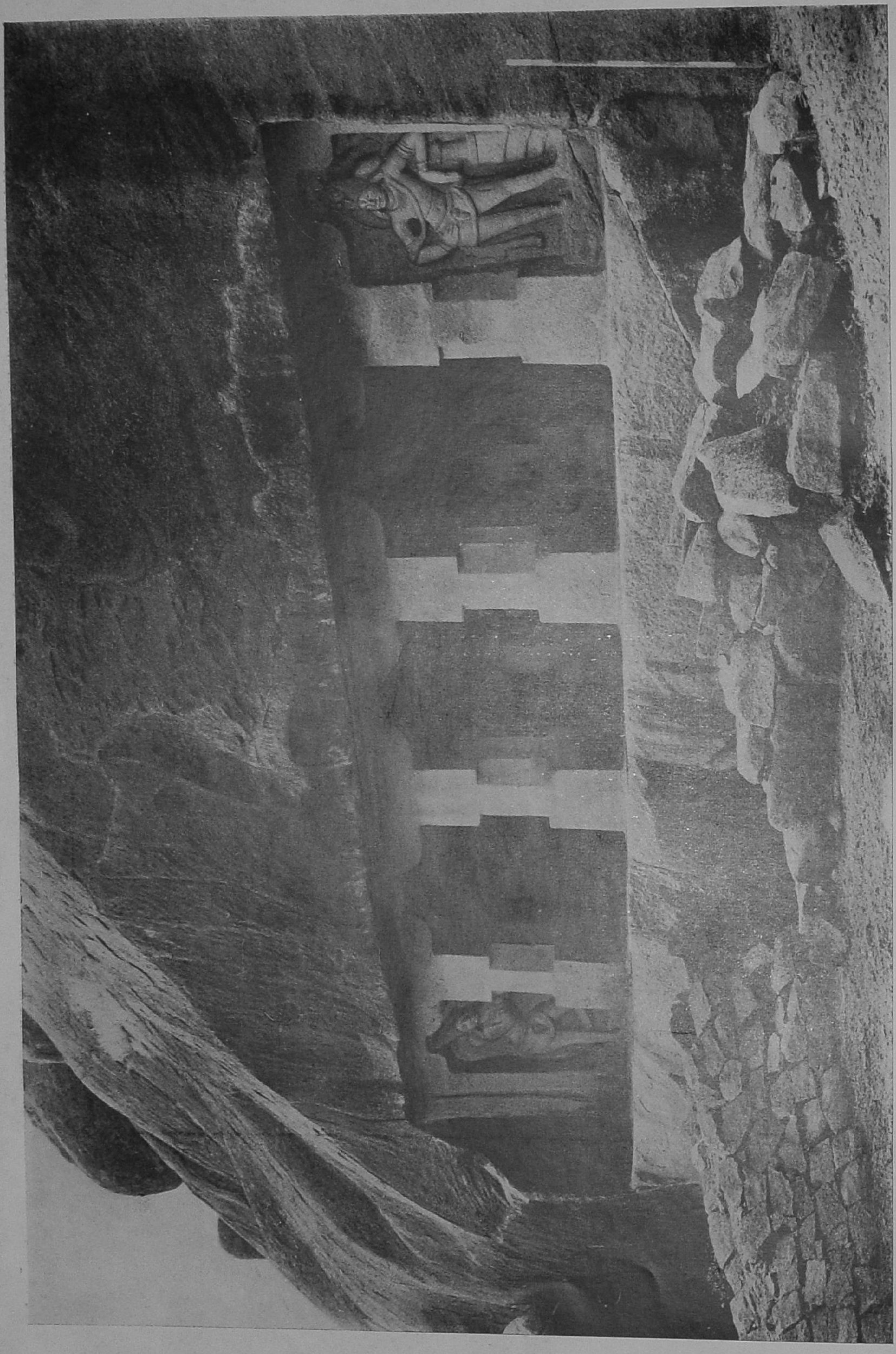


PLATE II

Maṇḍagappaṭṭu: Lakshita's cave-temple, the earliest excavated by Mahēndravarman I, bearing his inscription. External view, showing pillars, pilasters and dvāra-pālas on façade and the inner row of pillars and pilasters. Mahēndra style, Period I

See page 47

PLATE III

Maṇḍagappaṭṭu: Lakshita's cave-temple

A

Dvāra-pāla at the eastern end of façade

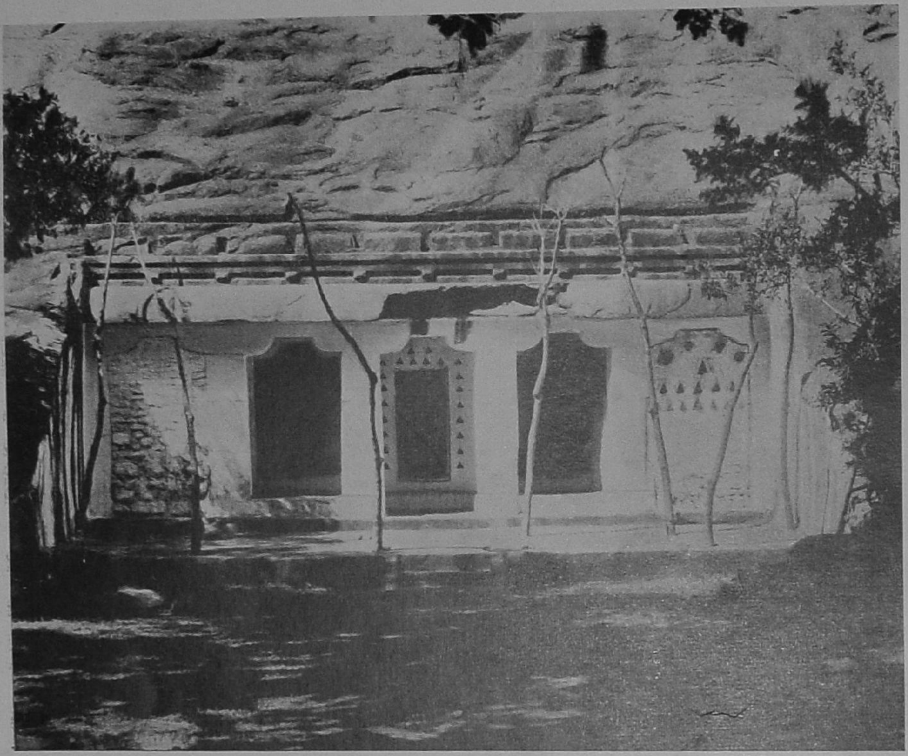
B

Dvāra-pāla at the western end of façade

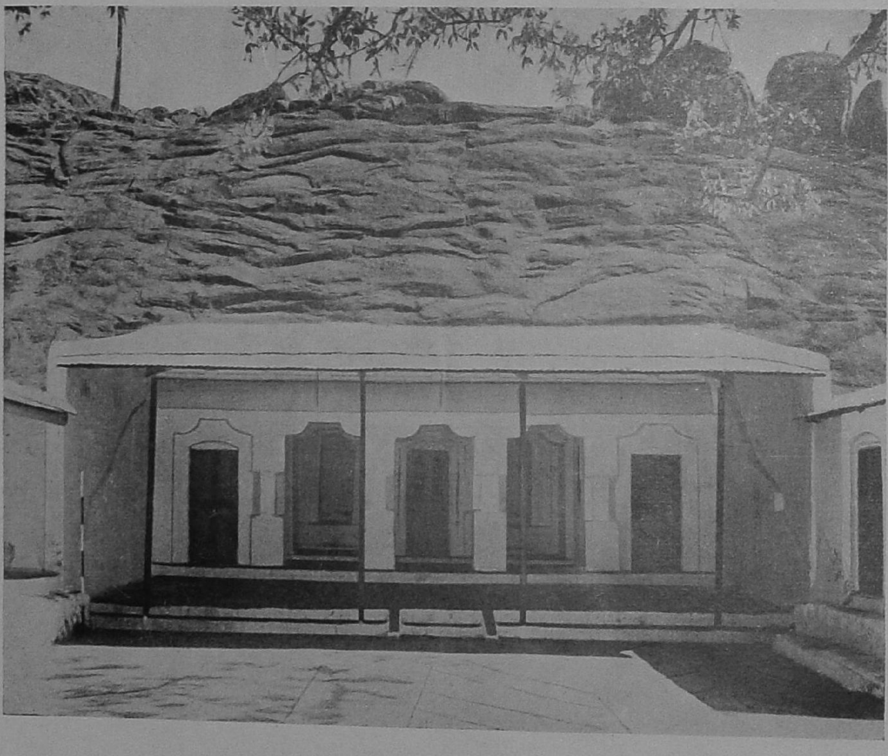
See page 50

A

B



A



B

PLATE IV

Pallāvaram: Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple, now a Muslim dargāh called Maula-kā-pahāḍ. Excavated by Mahēndra-varman I, bearing his inscriptions. Mahēndra style, Period I

A

Earlier external view, with brickwork partly closing the façade

B

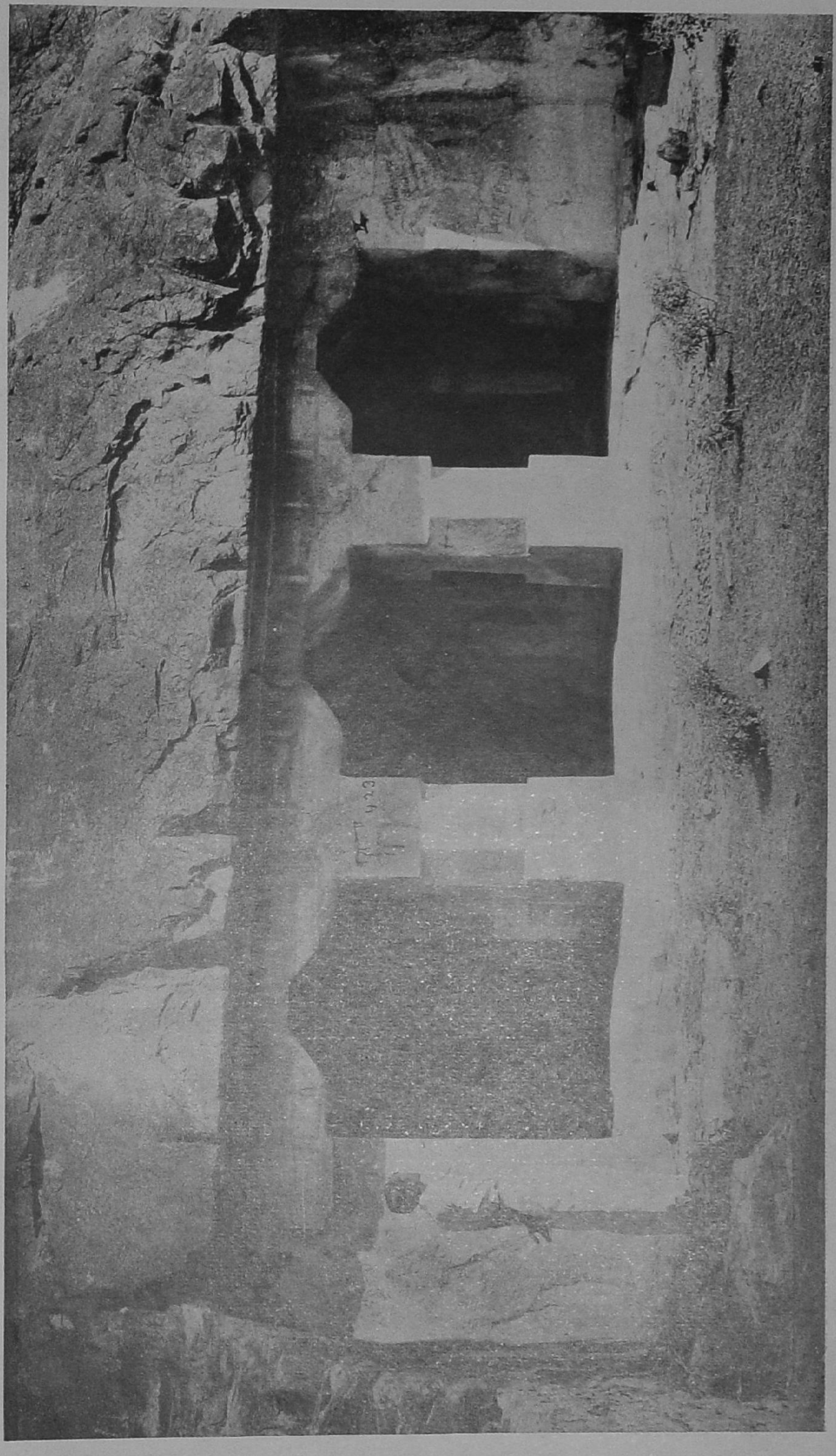
Present external view, with alterations in the brickwork and modern roof in front

See page 51

PLATE V

Māmaṇḍūr: Rudravālīśvaram cave-temple (Māmaṇḍūr II). External view of façade, with pillars and pilasters, those of the inner row partly visible. Note absence of dvāra-pālas on façade. Mahēndra style, Period I

See page 56



A

B

C

PLATE VI

Māmaṇḍūr: Rudravālīśvaram cave-temple (Māmaṇḍūr II), with three shrine-cells

A & B

Dvāra-pālas on the south and north of doorway of southern shrine, both sage-like

C

Dvāra-pāla on south of doorway of the central shrine, with the characteristic club and pose

See page 57

PLATE VII

Māmaṇḍūr: Rudravālīśvaram cave-temple (Māmaṇḍūr II), with three shrine-cells

A

Dvāra-pāla on north of doorway of central shrine, similar to and counterpart of plate VI C

B & C

Dvāra-pālas on south and north of doorway of northern shrine, both in similar pose, one hand in adoration and the other in kaṭi

See page 57

A

B

C

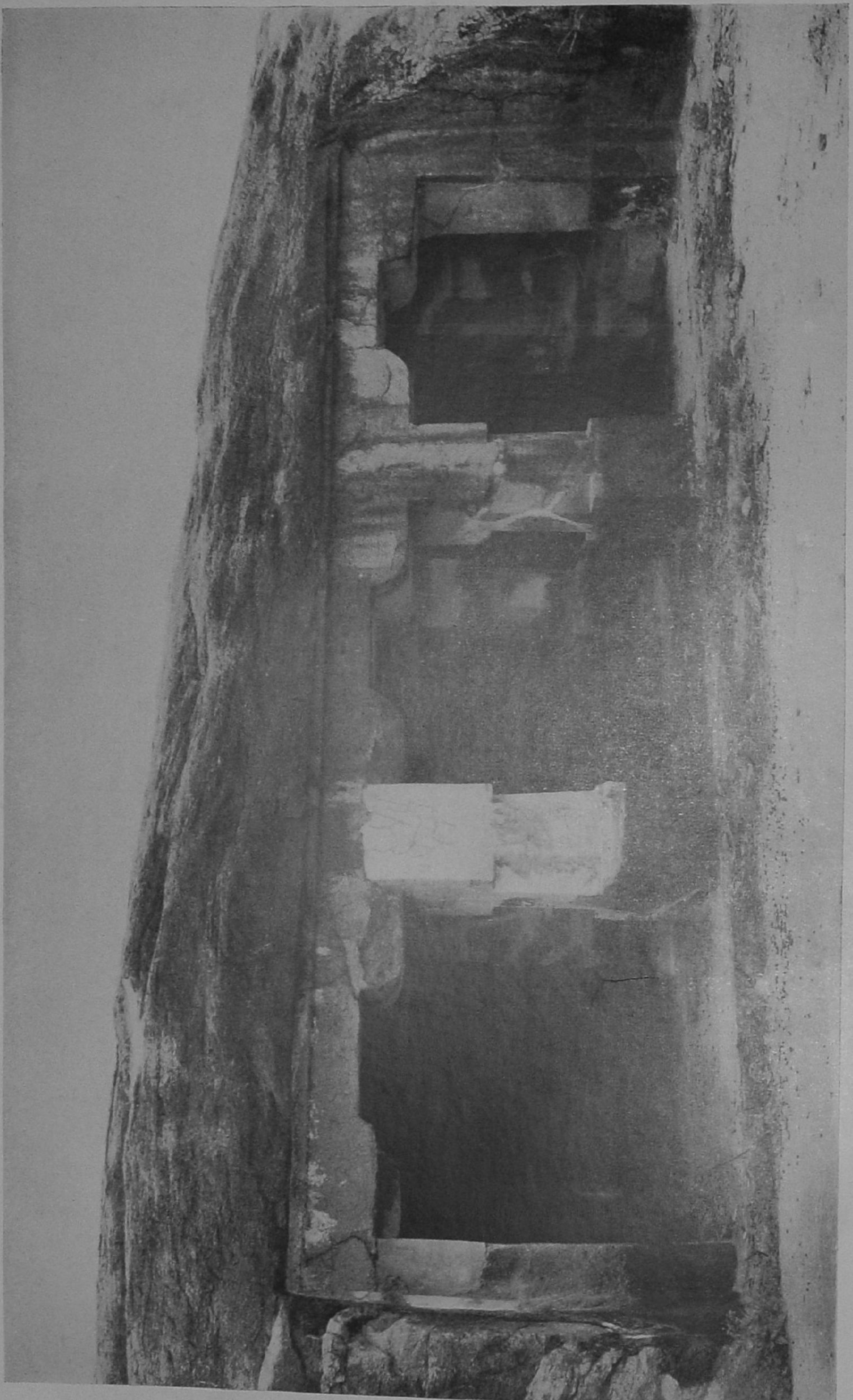


PLATE VIII

Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam: Kal-maṇḍakam cave-temple. External view of façade, with two pillars and two pilasters, those of the inner row partly visible. Mahēndra style, Period I

See page 60

PLATE IX

Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam: Kal-maṇḍakam cave-temple, with three shrine-cells

A & B

Almost idential dvāra-pālas on either side of doorway of southern shrine

C

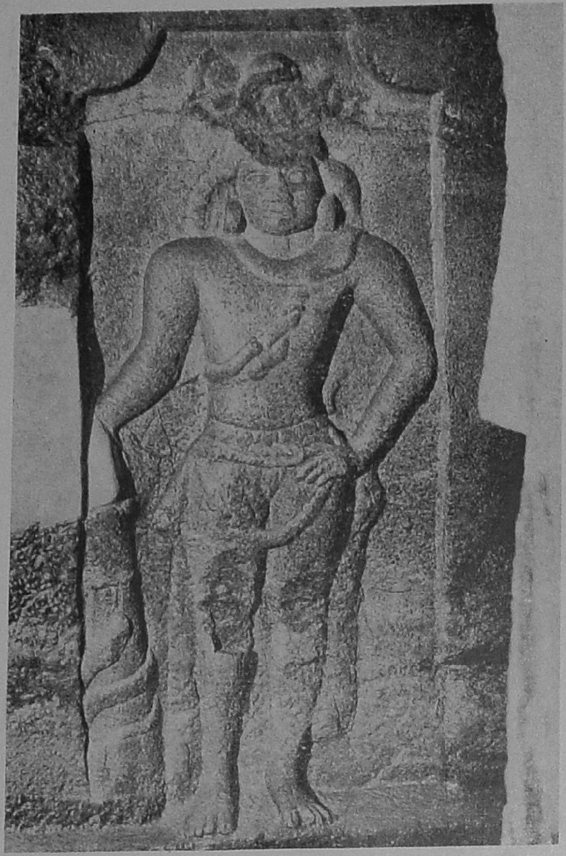
Dvāra-pāla on south of central shrine-doorway with characteristic horns on head and club

See page 60

A

B

C


A

B

C

PLATE X

Kuraṅgaṇilmuṭṭam: Kal-maṇḍakam cave-temple, with three shrine-cells

A

Dvāra-pāla on north of central shrine-doorway, counterpart of plate IX C, with characteristic club and without horns

B & C

Dvāra-pālas on either side of northern shrine-doorway, with slender build and beautiful poses, one hand in adoration and the other in kaṭi

See page 60

PLATE XI

A

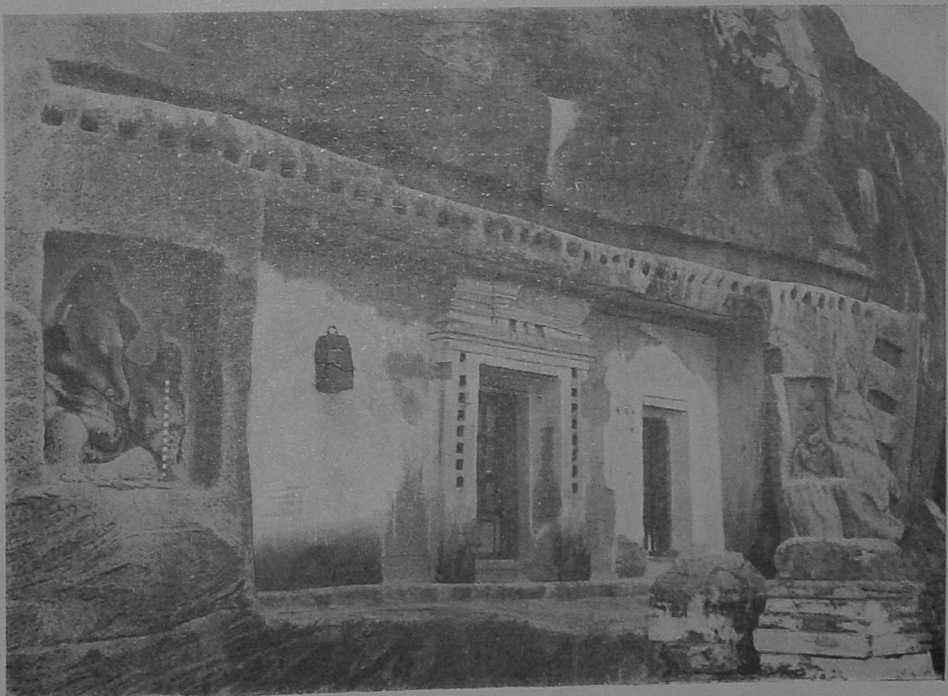
Vallam: general view of eastern side of the rock, with the three cave-temples excavated into three boulders—Vasantēśvaram cave-temple near the top, second immediately below it and third near the right extreme

B

Vallam: Vasantēśvaram cave-temple (Vallam I). Exterior view, showing façade of maṇḍapa walledup with brickwork and modern doors, the outlines of original pillars faintly visible on either side of central doorway. Bears an inscription of Mahēndravarman's time relating to its excavation. Mahēndra style, Period I. The Gaṇēśa and Jyēshṭhā sculptures in niches on either end of façade are subsequent additions

See pages 61 and 63

A



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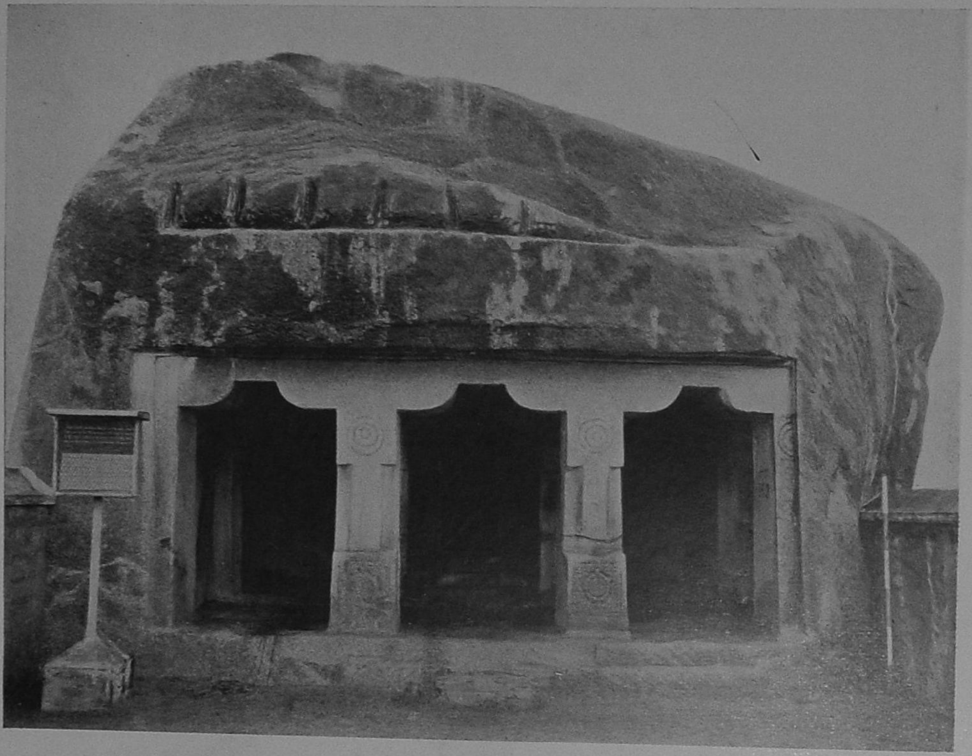
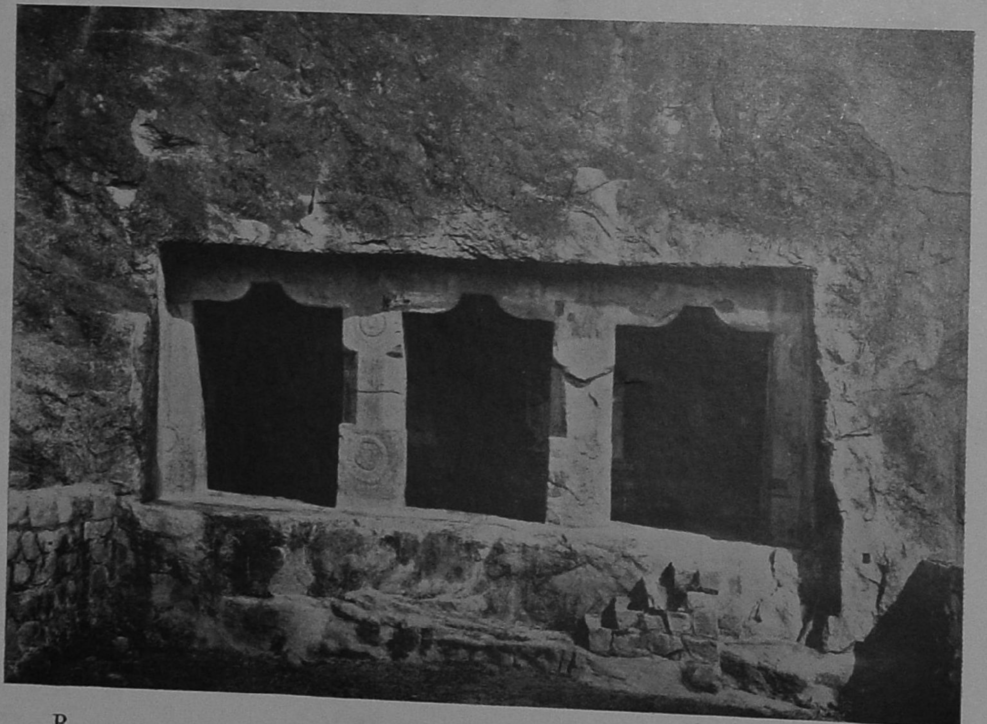


A



B

PLATE XII

A

Mahēndravāḍi: Mahēndra's Vishṇu cave-temple. General view, with pillars and pilasters having lotus-medallions, those of the inner row and the single shrine-cell dedicated to Vishṇu partially visible. Mahēndra style, Period I

B

Māmaṇḍūr: northern cave-temple (Māmaṇḍūr I). General view, with pillars and pilasters having lotus-medallions, the single shrine-cell behind probably dedicated to Vishṇu. Mahēndra style, Period I

See pages 66 and 69

PLATE XIII

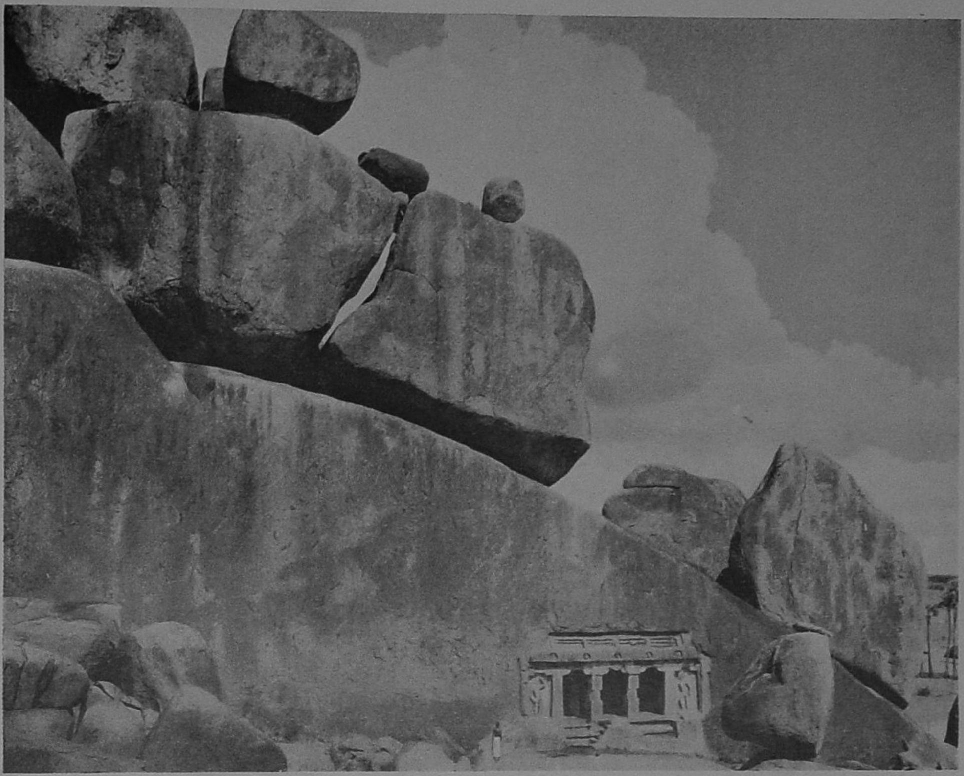
A

Daḷavāṉūr: hill with Śatrumalla's cave-temple. Note the part of the rock with the least top load chosen for the excavation. Excavated by Mahēndravarman I, bearing his inscriptions in Sanskrit and Tamil. Mahēndra style, Period I

B

Daḷavāṉūr: Śatrumalla's cave-temple. General view of façade, with ornate pillars, simple pilasters, well-formed cornice with kūḍu-arches, dvāra-pālas in extreme niches and broken lateral flights of steps with central landing in front

See pages 71 and 73



A

B

PLATE XIV

Daḷavāṉūr: Śatrumalla's cave-temple. Details of central ornate pillars, with a makara-tōraṇa above, formed by the corbels and beam-face over central bay, kūḍu-arches and the simulated terrace over kapōta. The frontal cut-stone steps are recent additions

See page 73

PLATE XV

Daḷavāṇūr: Śatrumalla's cave-temple, dvāra-pālas

A

At the western end of façade, without club

B

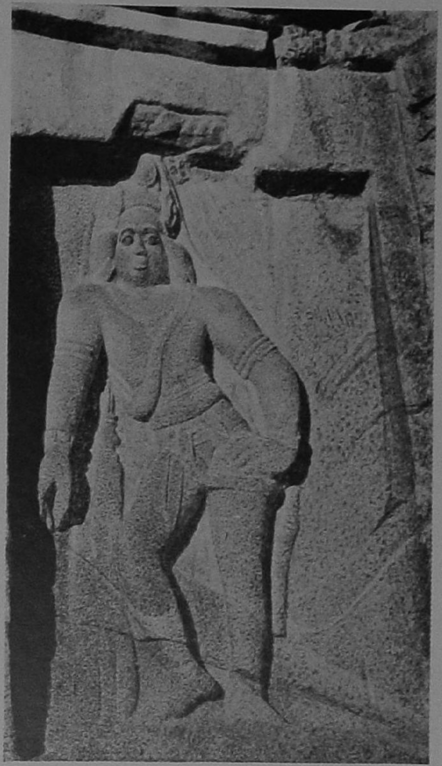
At the eastern end of façade, with club, similar to A *in dress and ornament*

C & D

On south and north respectively of the shrine-doorway, both without club and in almost similar pose

See pages 74 and 75

A



B

C

D

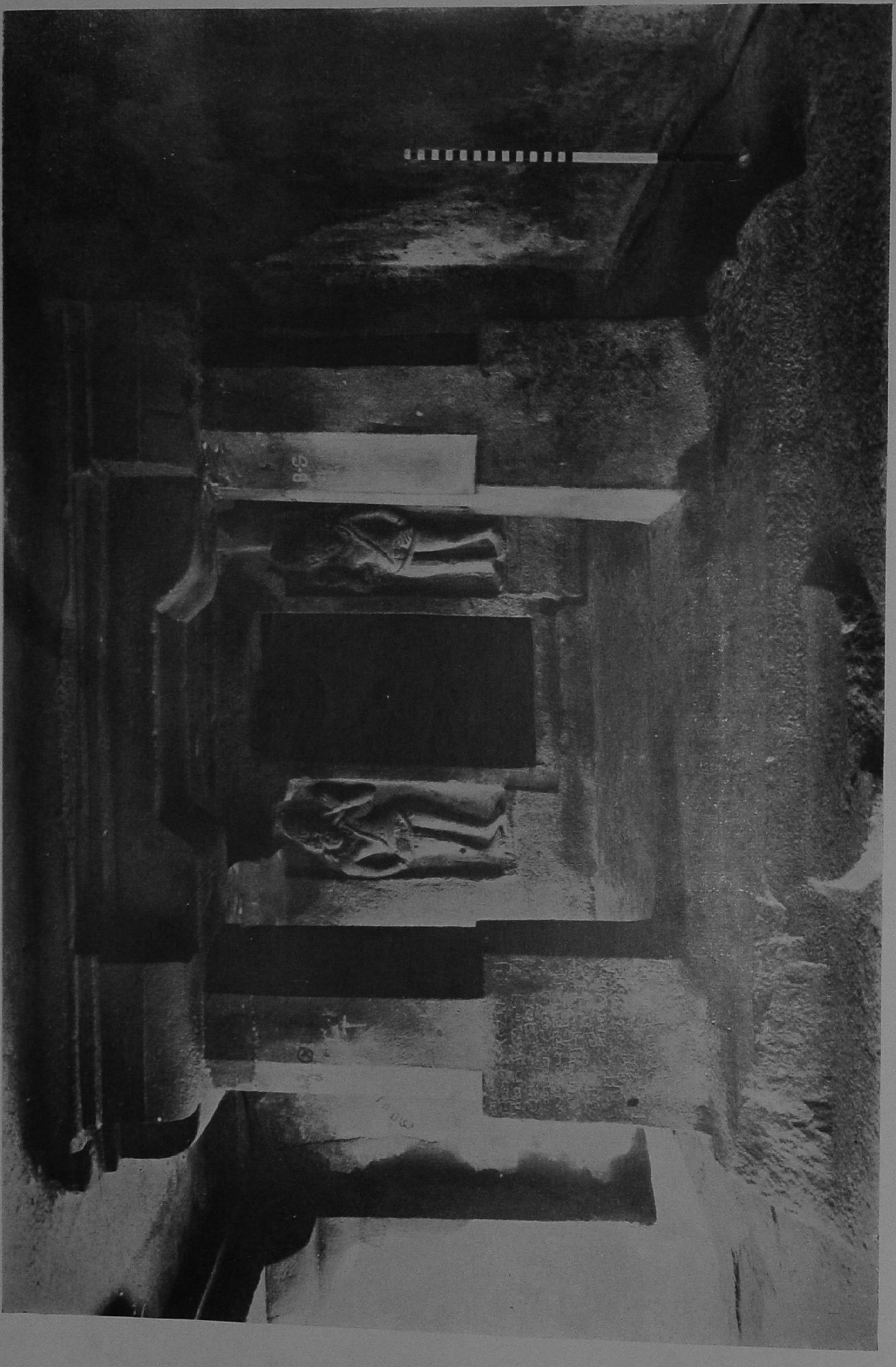


PLATE XVI

Daḷavāṉūr: Śatrumalla's cave-temple. Shrine-cell, with porch in front with unusual type of pillars (devoid of the top śaduram), well-formed kapōta above corbel and beam and chandra-śilā in front on floor. The Tamil inscription is seen at the basal śaduram of pillar on proper right. The dvāra-pālas (same as on plate XV C and D) and the shrine-doorway are seen in the rear

See page 75

PLATE XVII

Tiruchirāppaḷḷi: Lalitāṅkura's cave-temple. South-facing façade of cave-temple near the top of the hill, with four pillars and two pilasters with lotus-medallions and inscriptions of Mahēndravarman I. Mahēndra style, Period I

See page 81

A

B

C

D

E

F

PLATE XVIII

Tiruchirāppaḷḷi: Lalitāṅkura's cave-temple, pillar-medallions

A

Lotus-medallion on bases of pillars, lotus with four seriate petals, the two outer expanding and the two inner infolding over a central torus, whole bounded by two circles and beads

B

Scroll-medallion on top of easternmost pillar, consisting of radiating sprigs of scroll-foliage with circular centre, whole bounded by two circles and beads

C

Haṁsa-medallion on second pillar of façade from east, showing motif of haṁsa with its plumage and tail extended into an expanding scroll, which, along with another flourish issuing from its beak, fills the entire circle

D

Mātaṅganakra-medallion on third pillar from east, the fore part of composite animal being an elephant and the hind part a crocodile-like nakra, with its floriated tail expanding in all directions and filling the circle

E

Patralatā-medallion on westernmost pillar of façade; the design is a group of four convolute scrolls starting from a helical centre

F

Kinnarī-medallion on easternmost pillar of inner row, with a kinnarī (half-human and half-bird) as a central motif, the plumage expanding into a scroll all round

See pages 81 and 82

PLATE XIX

Tiruchirāppaḷḷi: Lalitāṅkura's cave-temple. Shrine-front on eastern wall of maṇḍapa, showing the moulded basement, steps, pilasters, cornice with kūḍu-arches and dvāra-pālas of the usual type on either side of the doorway

See page 84

PLATE XX

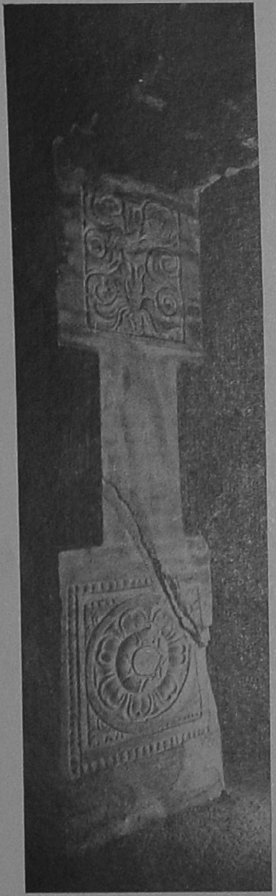
Tiruchirāppaḷḷi: Lalitāṅkura's cave-temple. Panel on west wall of maṇḍapa facing shrine-entrance (cf. plate XIX), showing Śiva as Gaṅgādhara receiving the descending Gaṅgā in his tresses and adored by devotees. The verse inscription of Mahēndravarman I is seen on the pilasters flanking the panel

See page 85

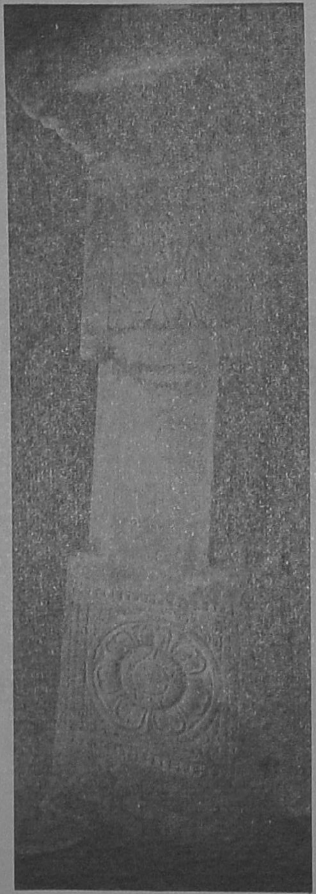
PLATE XXI

Śīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple. Façade-pillars, A *and* B, *and pilasters,* C *and* D, *with lotus-medallions at base, floral sprigs on lateral faces of the pillars,* A *and* B, *and panel-sculptures of dancing Śiva and Śiva-and-Umā on lateral faces of pilasters,* C *and* D. *Excavated by Mahēndravarman I, bearing his inscription. Mahēndra style, Period I*

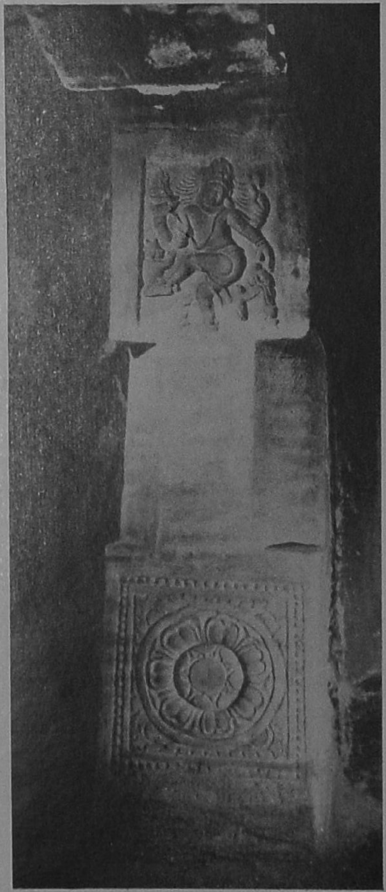
See pages 91 and 93



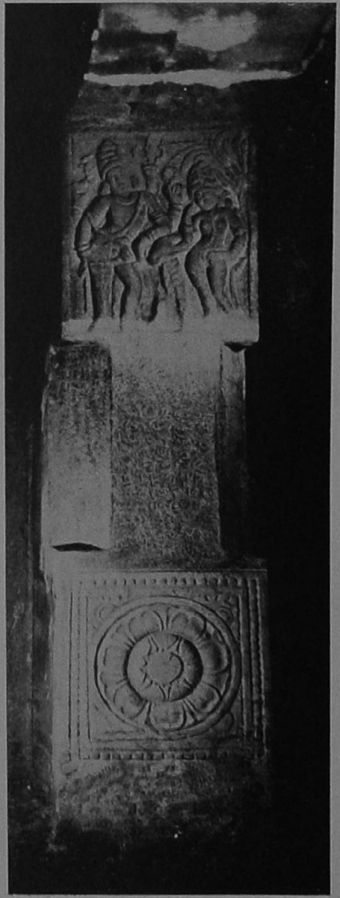
A



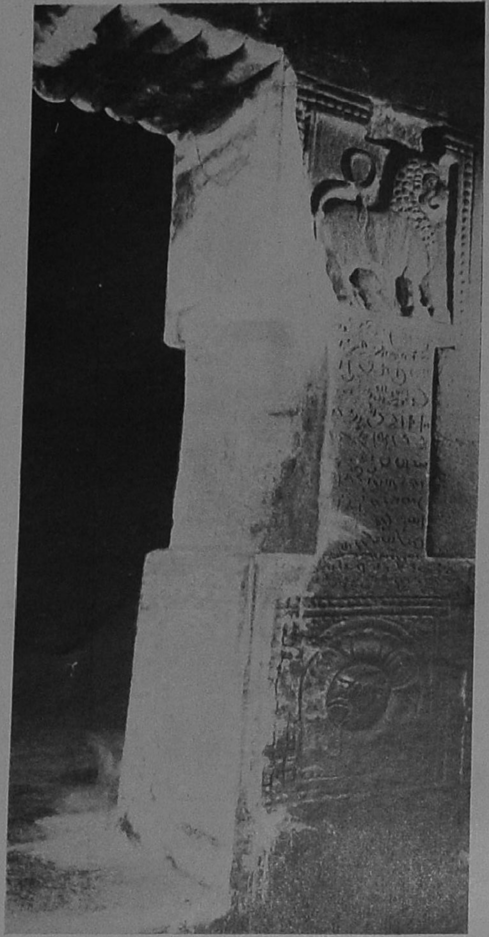
B



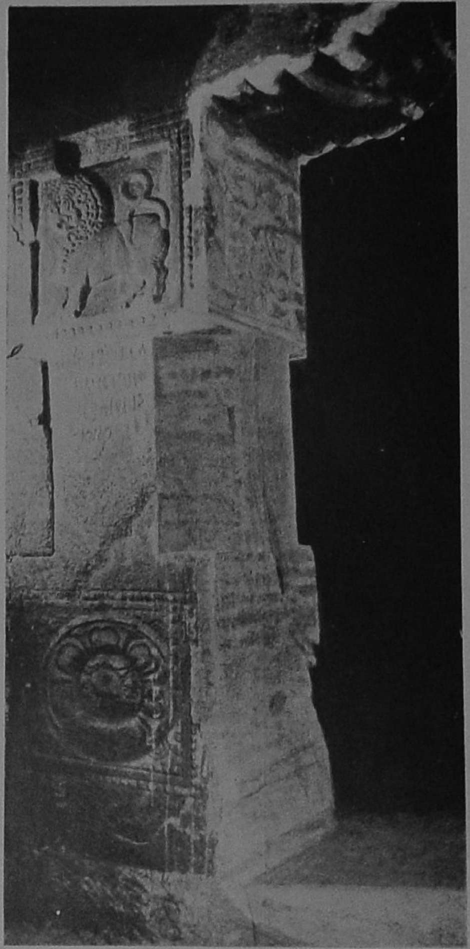
C



D



A



B

PLATE XXII

Śīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple. Front faces of north and south pillars, A *and* B, *showing lion with looped tail on the top square and lotus-medallion on the bottom. The inscription on* A *is that of Dantivarman and on* B *of Mahēndravarman I*

See page 91

PLATE XXIII

Śīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple. Dancing Śiva on top of north pilaster, four-armed and in bhujaṅga-trāsa (with cobra below), a gaṇa playing on the drum on one side and another on the opposite side singing

See page 92

A

B

PLATE XXIV

Sīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple. Warriors in niches at the north and south ends of maṇḍapa-façade, A, *holding shield aside and brandishing his daṇḍa to strike, and* B, *holding up his shield in defence*

See page 92

PLATE XXV

Sīyamaṅgalam: Avanibhājana's cave-temple

A

Shrine-front, with moulded basement, plain pilasters, kapōta above and typical dvāra-pālas guarding entrance; liṅga inside is not rock-cut

B

Northern dvāra-pāla, horned and facing front

C

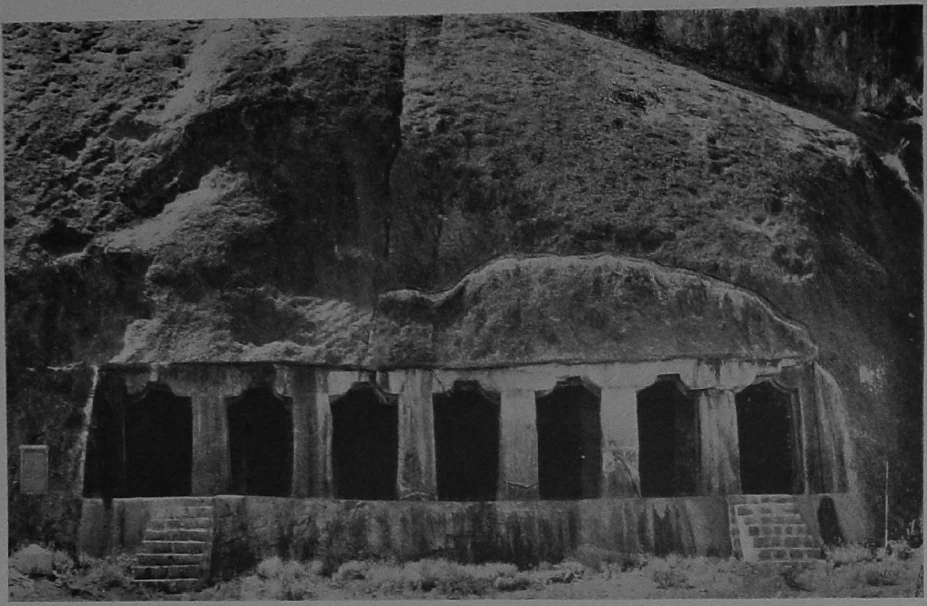
Southern dvāra-pāla in semi-profile and without horns

See page 93

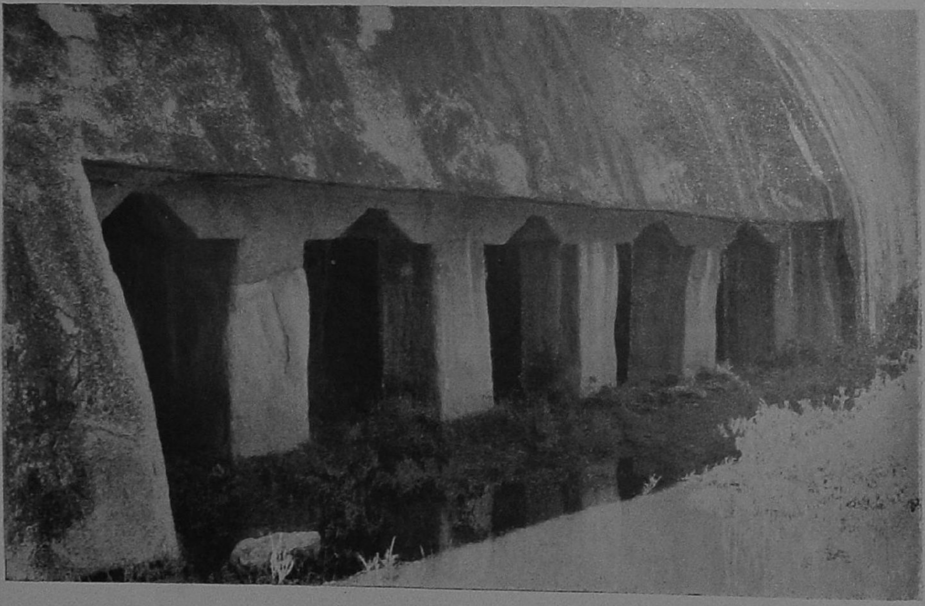
A

B

C



A



B

PLATE XXVI

A

Vilāppākkam: Pañchapāṇḍava cave-temple. Façade of unfinished cave-temple showing pillars and pilasters. Mahēndra style

B

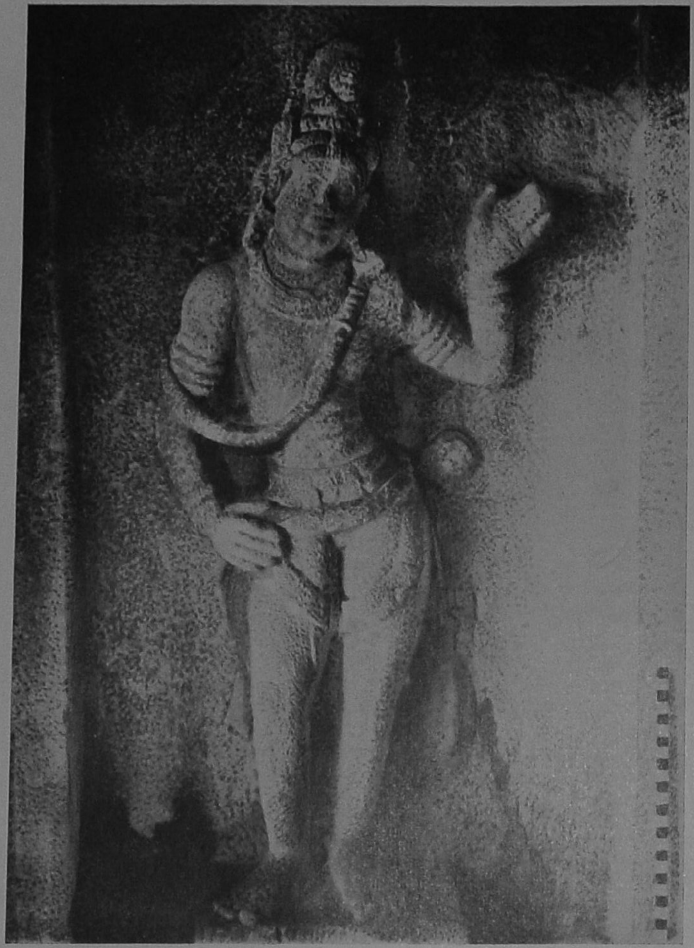
Aragaṇḍanallūr: unfinished cave-temple, showing massive façade-pillars. Mahēndra style

See pages 96 and 98

PLATE XXVII

Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam: Orukal-maṇḍapam. View of cave-temple, showing pillars and pilasters of façade and inner row and some of the sculptures inside. Bears an inscription of Māmalla. Mahēndra style, Period II

See page 100



A

B

PLATE XXVIII

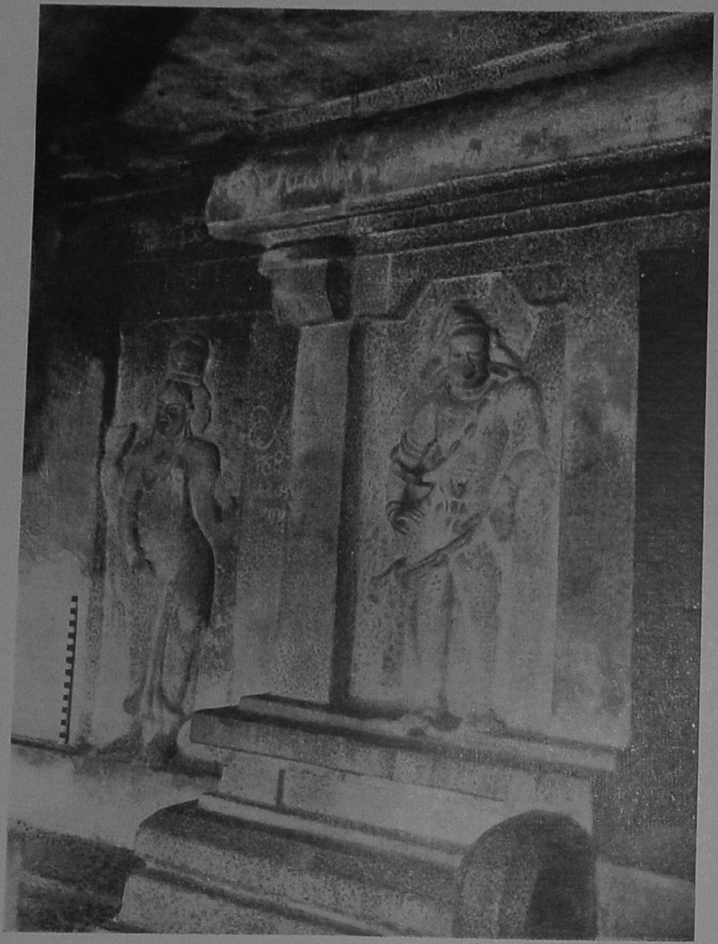
Tirukkaḷukkuṉṟam: Orukal-maṇḍapam. A & B, *almost identical sculptures of celestials on the southern and northern end-walls of the mukha-maṇḍapa, one hand in pose of adoration and the other in kaṭi, suitably reversed for symmetry*

See page 100

PLATE XXIX

Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam: Orukal-maṇḍapam. Projected shrine-front, showing moulded base with steps, plain pilasters, corbels, kapōta and dvāra-pālas in niches on either side of doorway. The liṅga inside is not rock-cut

See page 102



A

B

PLATE XXX

Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam: Orukal-maṇḍapam

A

Dvāra-pāla on south of doorway of projecting shrine-front and Brahmā on adjoining back wall of the inner maṇḍapa

B

Dvāra-pāla on north of doorway of projecting shrine-front and Vishṇu on adjoining hind wall of inner maṇḍapa

See pages 102 and 103

PLATE XXXI

Mahābalipuram: Kōṭikal-maṇḍapam, dedicated to Durgā.
Mahēndra style, Period II

A

Façade, showing pillars (one with Pallava-grantha inscription), pilasters and corbels

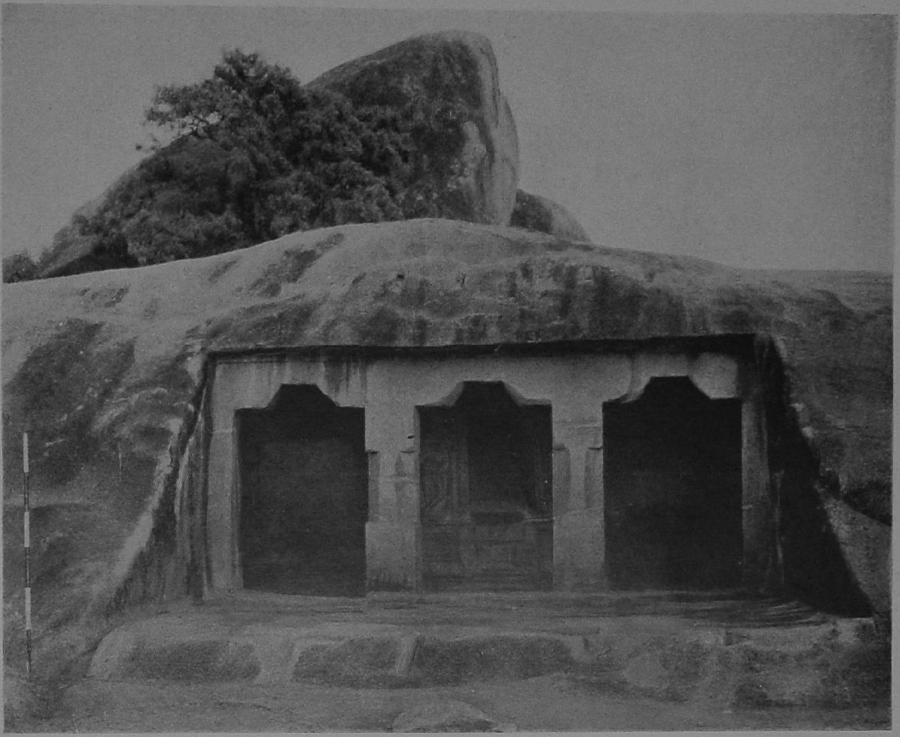
B

Projected shrine-front, with adhishṭhāna and steps and dvāra-pālikās guarding shrine-doorway

C

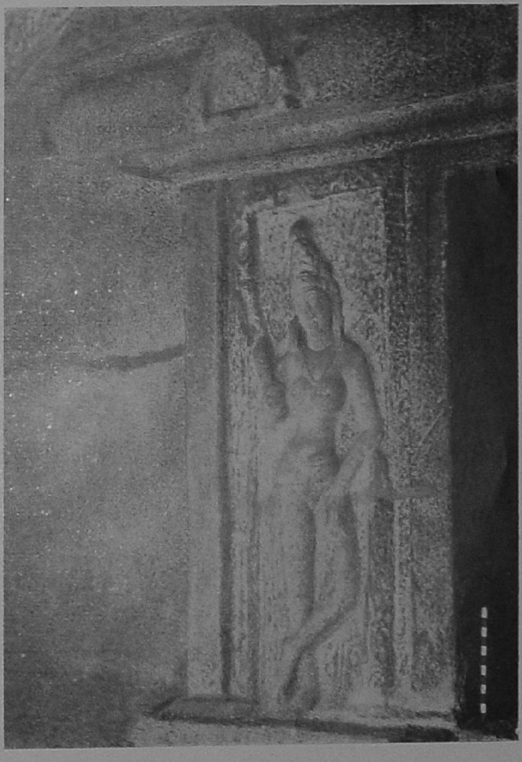
Details of northern dvāra-pālikā and kapōta and kūḍu above

See page 107



A

B



C

A

B

PLATE XXXII

A

Śiṅgavaram: Raṅganātha cave-temple. Mahishamardinī, four-armed, in niche beyond the façade of the cave-temple, with one of the devotees cutting his hand and the other in adoration. Mahēndra style, Period II

B

Mēlachēri: Śikhari-Pallavēśvaram cave-temple. Excavated by Chandrāditya, who is not a Pallava. An aberrant example in the Pallava country. Rock-cut liṅga inside shrine. Circa A.D. *650-700*

See pages 115 and 116

PLATE XXXIII

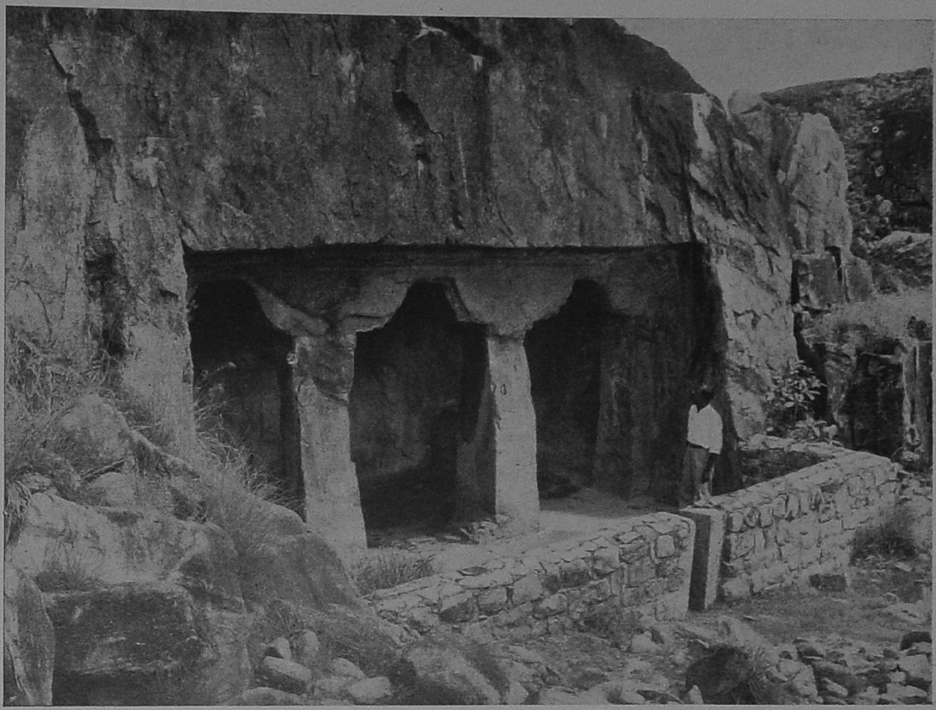
A

Māmaṇḍūr (IV): smaller unfinished cave-temple. Mahēndra style, Period II

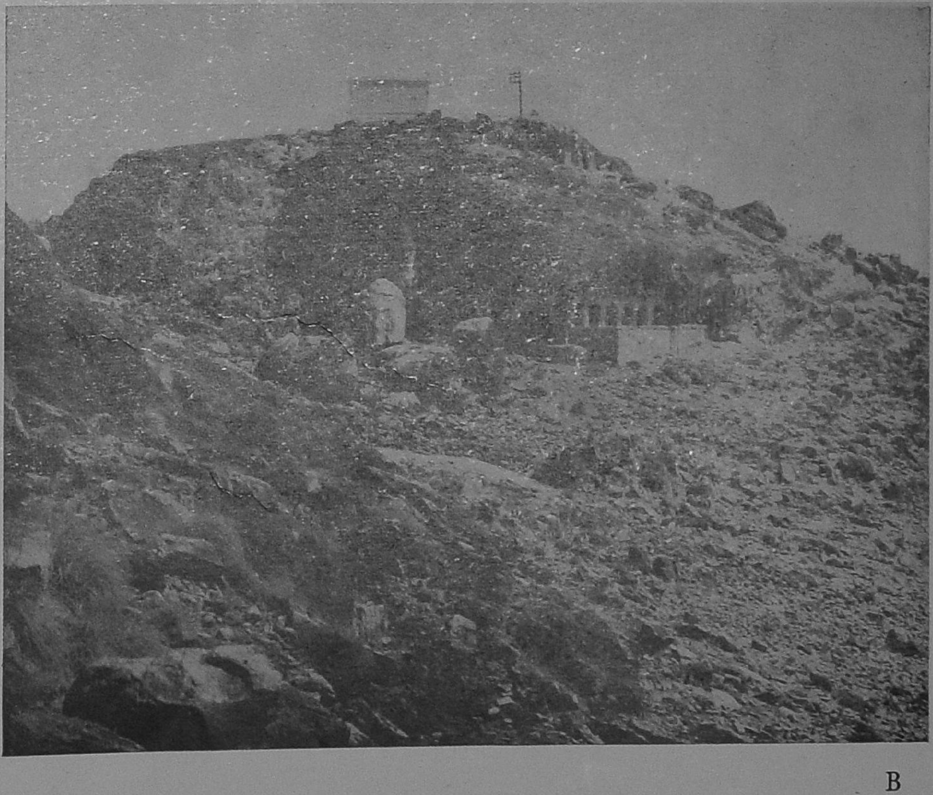
B

Māmaṇḍūr (III): larger unfinished cave-temple, showing attempt to carve a pillared verandah round a row of central shrines. Mahēndra style, Period II

See pages 118 and 120



A



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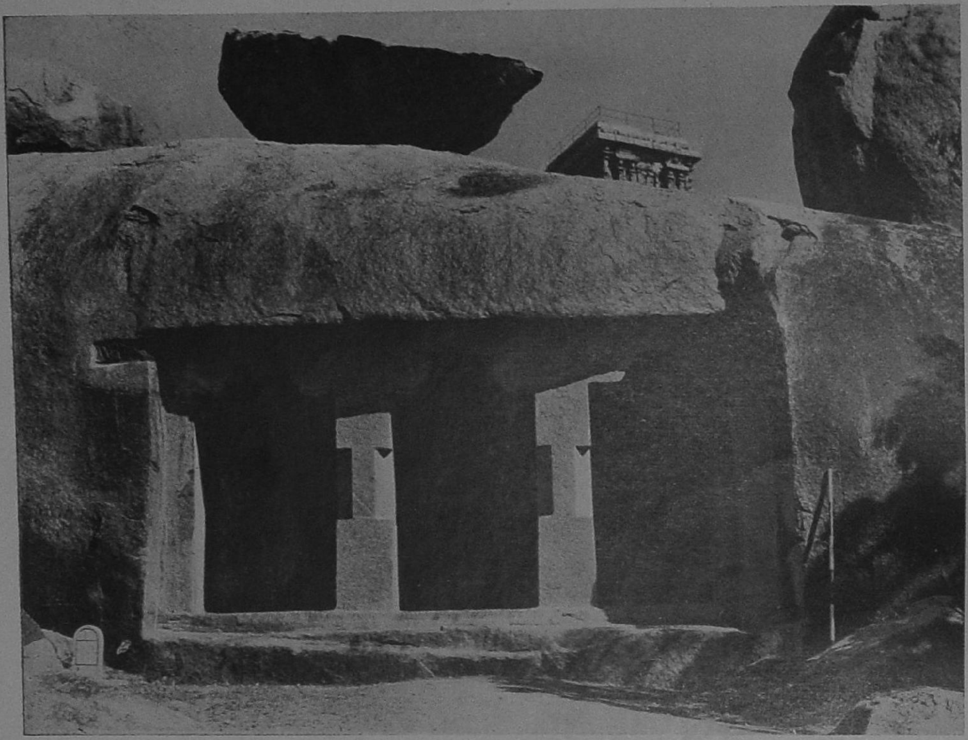

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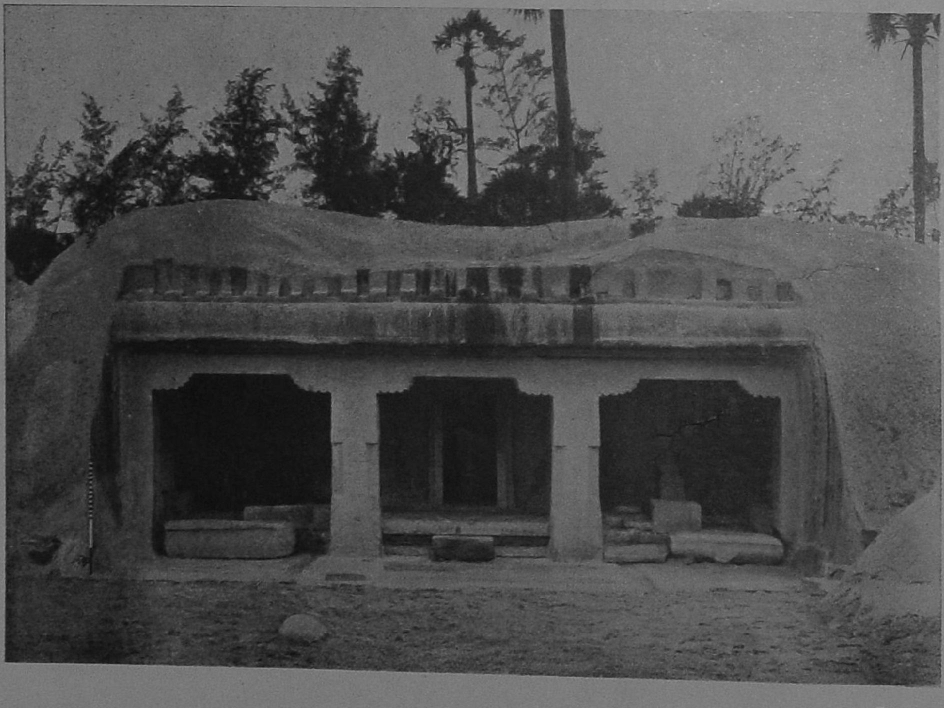


B

PLATE XXXIV

A

Mahābalipuram: Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam or Atyantakāma's cave-temple. Bears an inscription of Paramēśvara I or Atyantakāma. Has three empty shrine-cells, perhaps dedicated to the Trimūrtis. Mahēndra style, Period II

B

Śāḷuvaṅkuppam: Atiraṇachaṇḍa-maṇḍapam. Excavated by Rājasiṁha or Atiraṇachaṇḍa as stated in its inscriptions. Contains sculptures of Sōmāskanda on back wall of shrine-cell and back wall of maṇḍapa on either side of shrine. The cell has a loose prismatic liṅga. Mahēndra style, Period II

See pages 122 and 127

PLATE XXXV

Mahābalipuram: Dharmarāja-maṇḍapam or Atyantakāma's cave-temple. The three shrines are devoid of sculptures and the outlines of the chiselled-off dvāra-pālas are seen flanking the doorway of the central shrine

See page 122

PLATE XXXVI

Śāḷuvaṅkuppam: Mahisha-mardinī panel on low rock in front of Atiraṇachaṇḍa's cave-temple, showing Durgā fighting and the asura in flight. Rājasiṁha's time

See page 130

PLATE XXXVII

A

Kīḻmāvilaṅgai: Vishṇu rock-cut cell, containing bas-relief Vishṇu. Mahēndra style, Period III

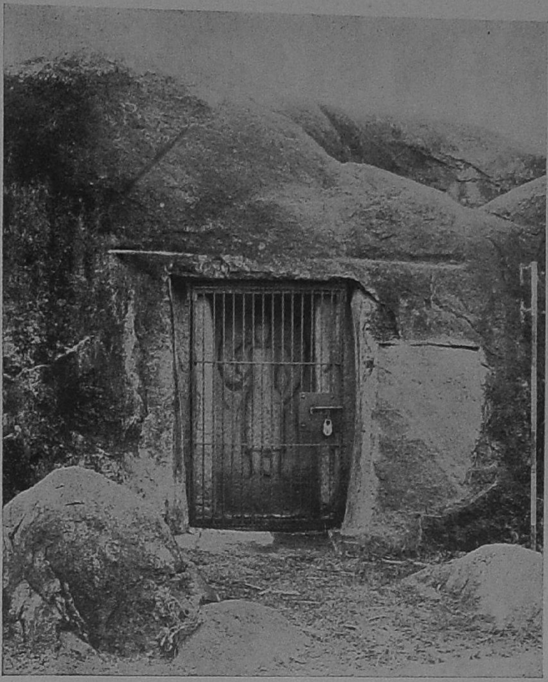
B

Vallam II: lower (Śiva) cave-temple, with narrow ardha-maṇḍapa devoid of pillars and plain shrine-cell with dvāra-pālas behind. Mahēndra style, Period III

C

Vallam III: northern (Vishṇu) cave-temple, with narrow ardha-maṇḍapa, the slender pillars of which have been cut off below the corbels, a plain shrine-cell behind with dvāra-pālas on either side. The loose sculpture inside is a later addition. Mahēndra style, Period III

See pages 130, 132 and 134



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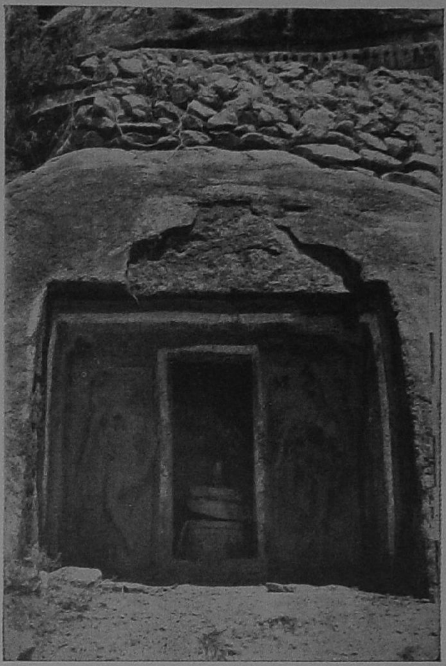

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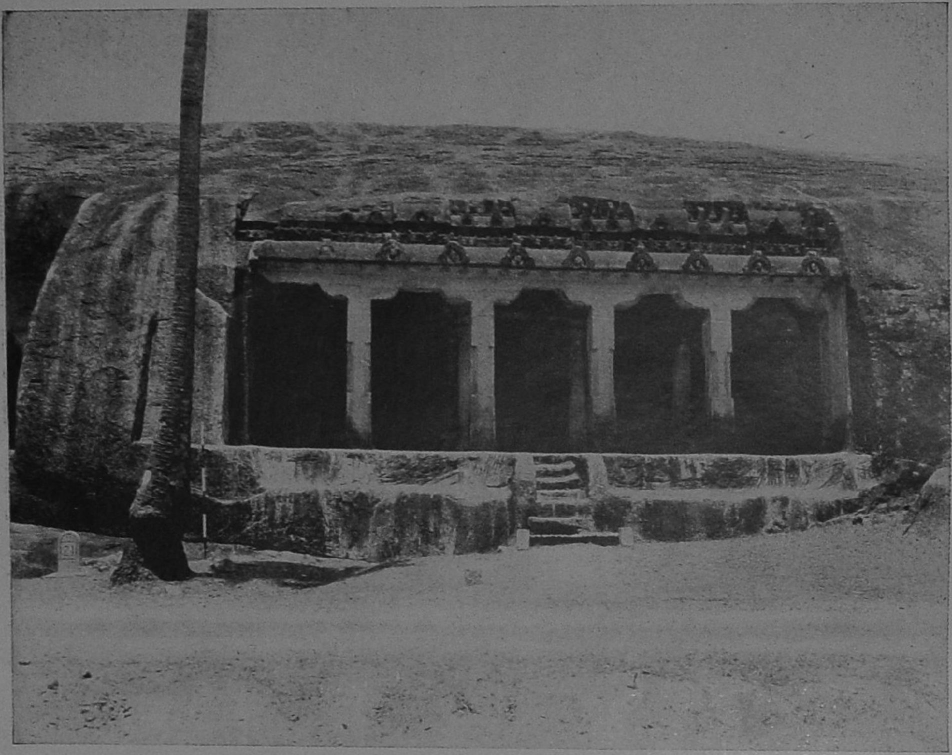
C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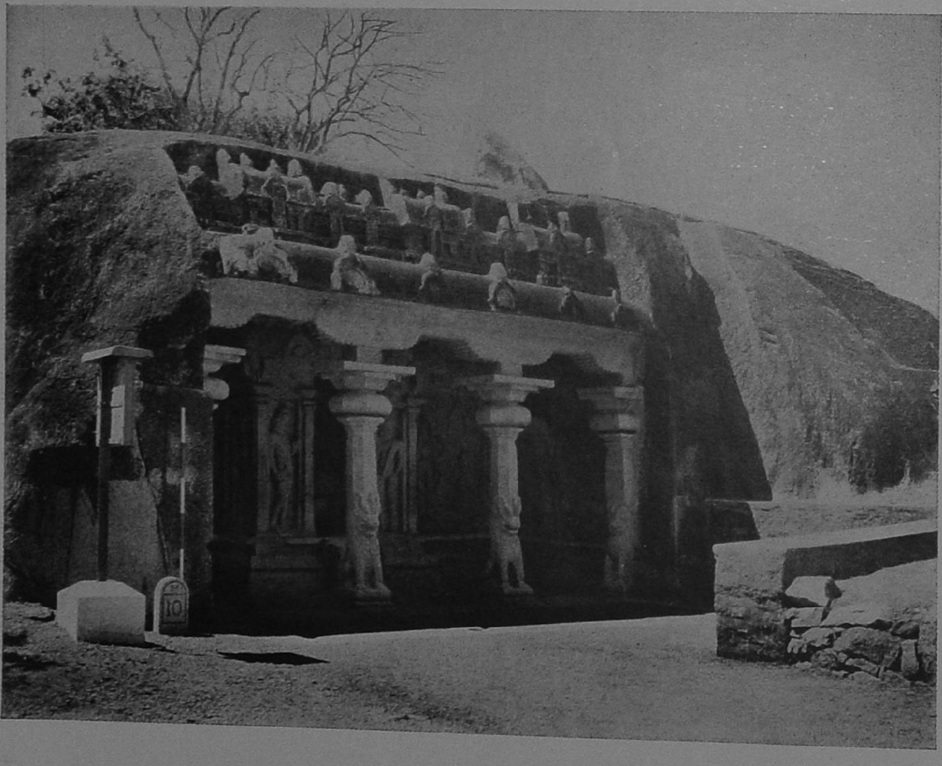

B

PLATE XXXVIII

A

Mahābalipuram: Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam, five-celled rock-cut Śiva temple, with slender Mahēndra type pillars on the façade and kapōta above with kūḍu-arches and row of miniature shrines on top. The inner row of pillars are of the Māmalla style with capitals below the corbel. Māmalla style (transition from Mahēndra to Māmalla style)

B

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam cave-temple, with vyāla-based pillars and pilasters of façade carrying capitals, kapōta with kūḍus, and row of miniature shrines on top. The shrine-front projects from the hind wall of the maṇḍapa. Perhaps dedicated to Vishṇu. Māmalla style

See pages 134 and 141

PLATE XXXIX

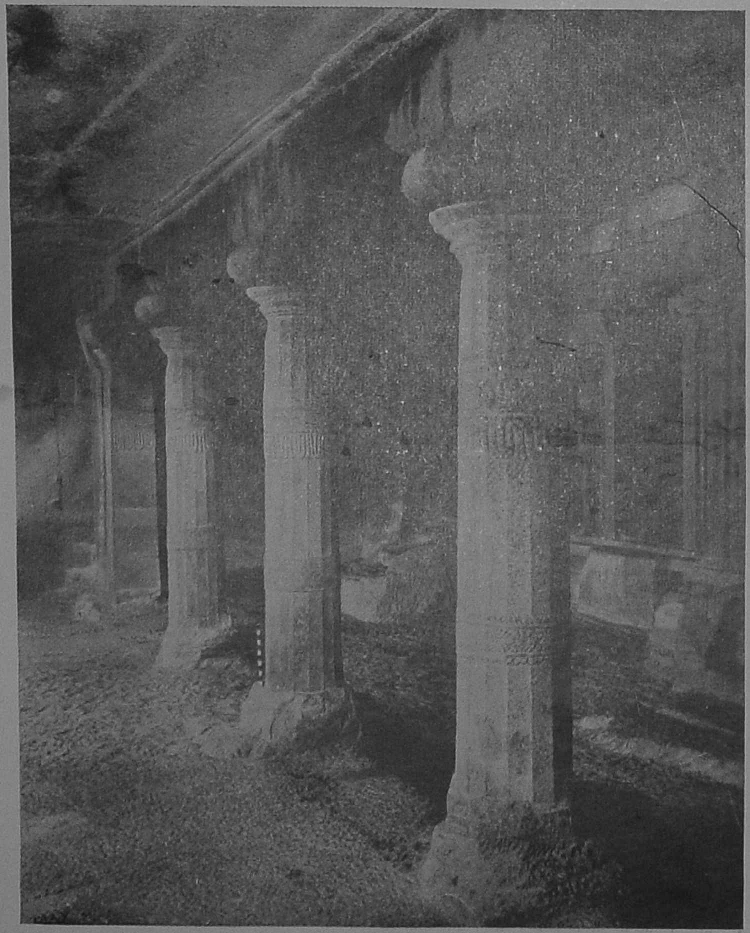
A

Mahābalipuram: Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam, five-celled rock-cut Śiva temple. Inner row of ornate pillars without lion-bases, but with capitals and fluted corbels of Māmalla type in contrast to the Mahēndra type pillars of façade seen on plate XXXVIII A

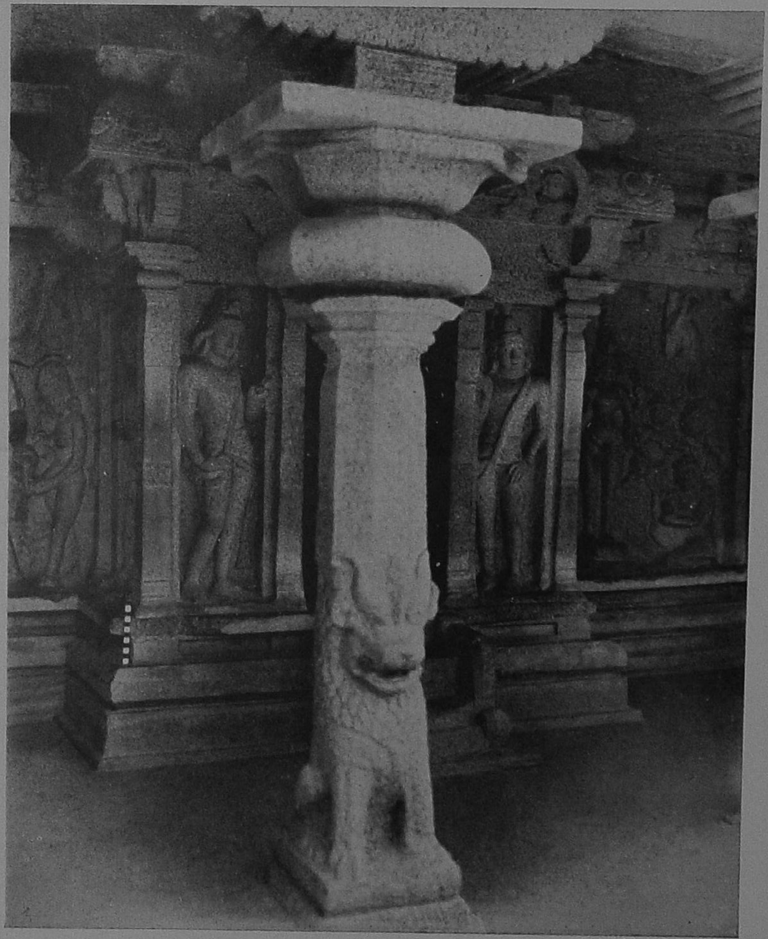
B

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam cave-temple. Details of vyāla-based façade-pillar, elevation of shrine-front and dvāra-pāla niches

See pages 138 and 144



A



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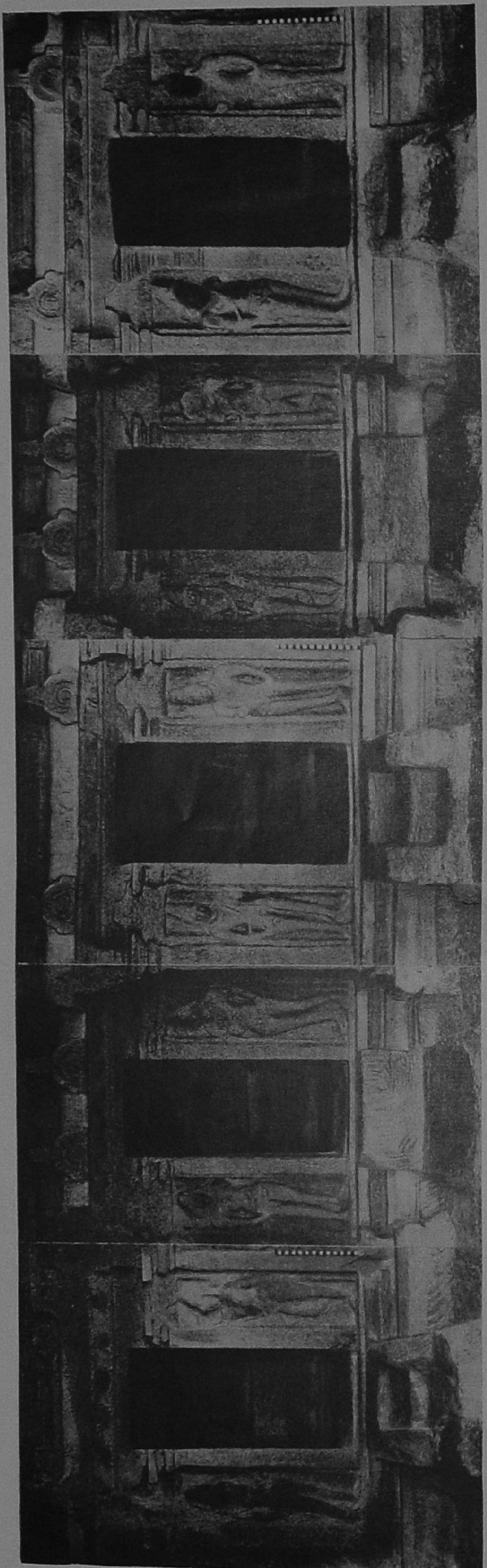


PLATE XL

Mahābalipuram: Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam, five-celled rock-cut Śiva temple. The central and extreme shrine-fronts are projected and the two intermediate ones recessed, all with fully-developed mouldings from base to cornice. The five sets of dvāra-pālas are different from each other. The hind walls of the empty shrines have shallow niches for fitting carved square plaques of the principal deity

See page 138

PLATE XLI

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam. Bhū-Varāha panel on north wall of maṇḍapa, showing Vishṇu as Varāha-mūrti retrieving the Goddess of Earth from the nether regions

See page 146

PLATE XLII

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam. Gaja-Lakshmī panel on hind wall of maṇḍapa, north of shrine-entrance. Śrī or Lakshmī on lotus, bathed by elephants and with attendants carrying water (compare similar sculpture on plate LIV A)

See page 147

PLATE XLIII

Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam. Durgā panel on hind wall of maṇḍapa, south of shrine-entrance. Four-armed Durgā standing on lotus-pedestal with lion and deer at top corners, two devotees below, one in the act of self-immolation and the other in prayer

See page 148

PLATE XLIV

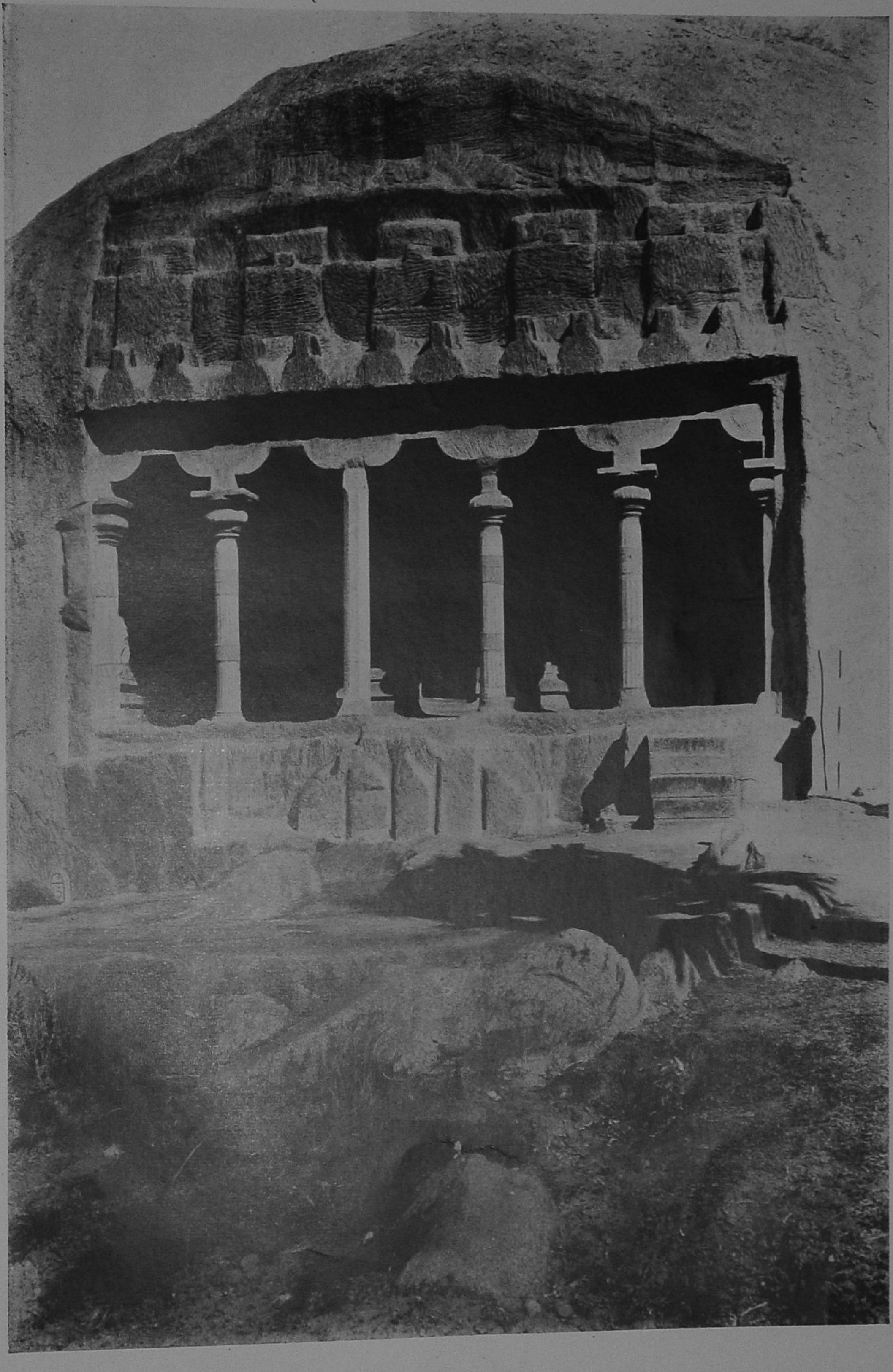
Mahābalipuram: Varāha-maṇḍapam. Trivikrama panel on south wall of maṇḍapa. Eight-armed Vishṇu as Trivikrama, measuring the universe by his two strides to the discomfiture of Bali, seated on his left below

See page 147

PLATE XLV

Mahābalipuram: Mahisha-mardinī cave-temple. Façade, showing unfinished base and top and finished slender pillars and pilasters of the Māmalla type with capitals and without vyāla-bases. The second pillar from the left is a substitute for the missing one. Māmalla style

See page 150



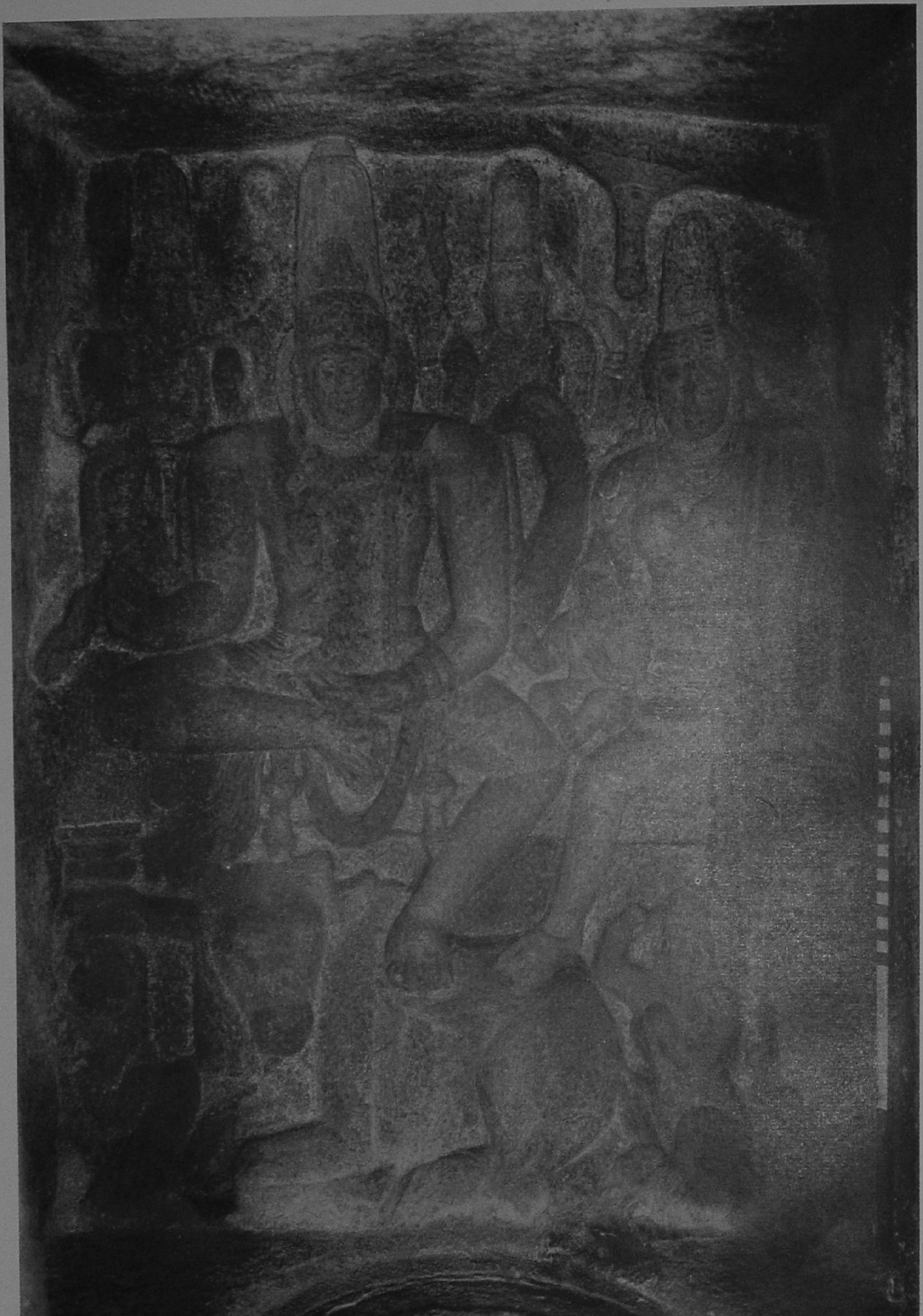


PLATE XLVI

Mahābalipuram: Mahisha-mardinī cave-temple. Sōmāskanda relief on hind wall of shrine-cell, showing Śiva, Umā and baby Skanda with Brahmā and Vishṇu in the background; the recumbent nandi below is not found in other Sōmāskanda sculptures

See page 153

PLATE XLVII

Mahābalipuram: Mahisha-mardinī cave-temple. Mahisha-mardinī panel, depicting the vigorous fight between eight-armed Durgā on lion followed by gaṇa and female attendants and Mahishāsura with buffalo-head followed by his asura attendants

See page 154

PLATE XLVIII

Mahābalipuram: Mahisha-mardinī cave-temple. Yōga-śayana Vishṇu, reclining on serpent couch in yōga-nidrā and the aggres sive demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha standing beyond his feet

See page 155

PLATE XLIX

Mahābalipuram: Trimūrti cave-temple. Excavation of three contiguous vimāna-fronts, unlike the usual maṇḍapa-fronts. The central shrine is dedicated to Śiva, the one to its right to Brahmā-śāstā and the one to its left to Vishṇu. At the southern extreme is a separate niche with Durgā. Māmalla style

See page 156

PLATE L

Mahābalipuram: Trimūrti cave-temple. Eight-armed Durgā standing on buffalo-head inside a stambha-tōraṇa over a moulded adhishṭhāna

See page 160

PLATE LI

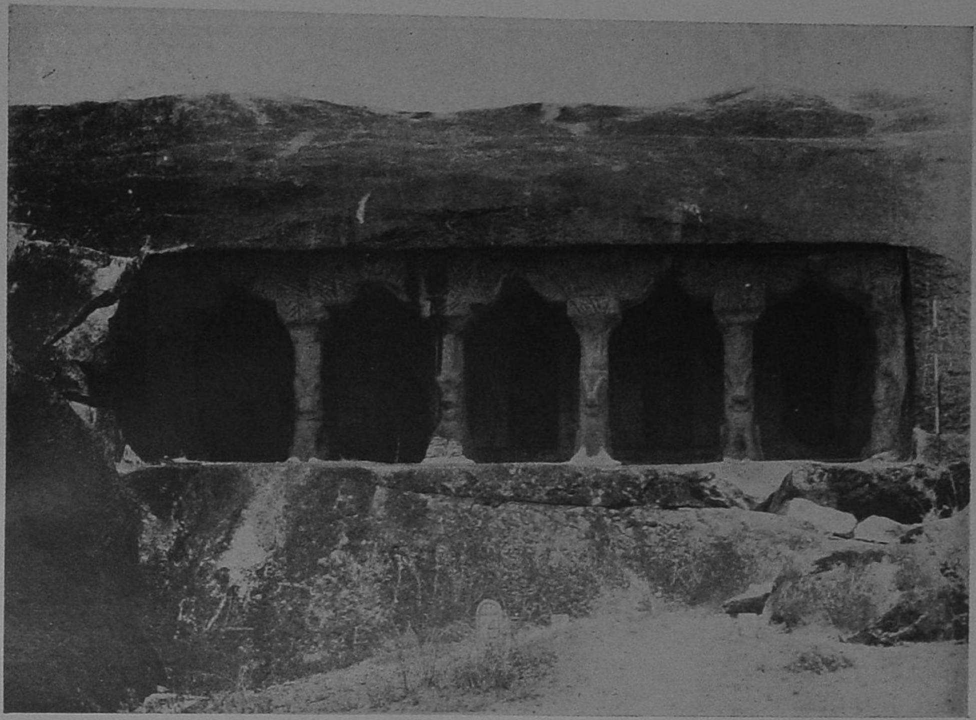
A

Mahābalipuram: Pulipudar-maṇḍapam, unfinished cave-temple, with vyāla-based façade-pillars and five cell-openings inside. Māmalla style

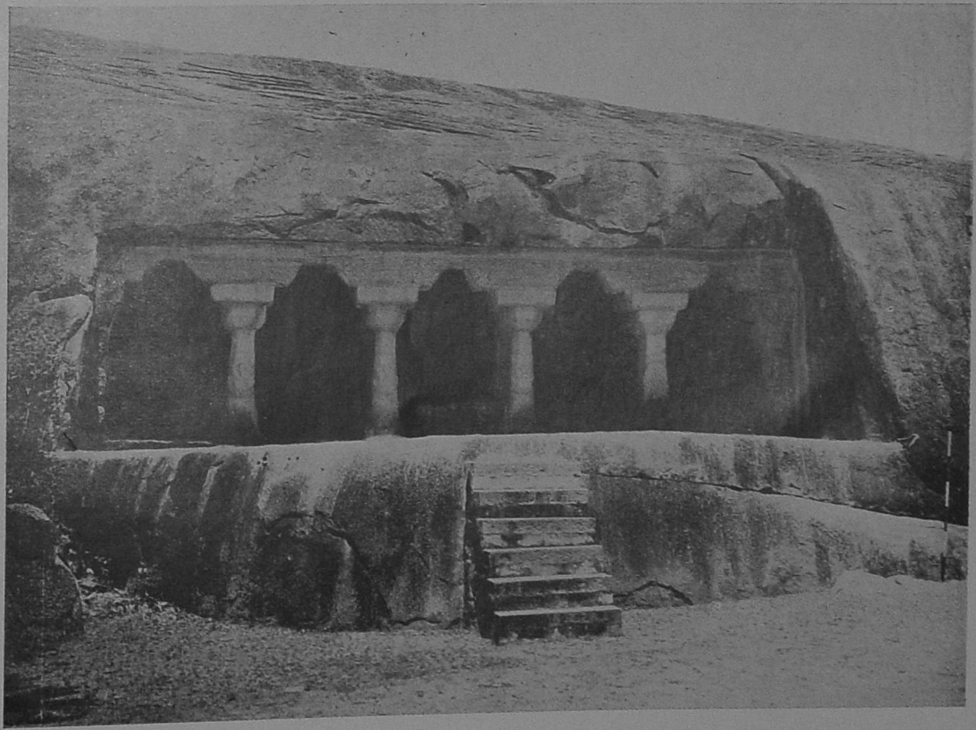
B

Mahābalipuram: Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam, unfinished cave-temple, north of the Kōṉēri-maṇḍapam, with lion-based façade-pillars and the interior in the process of excavation. Māmalla style

See page 161



A



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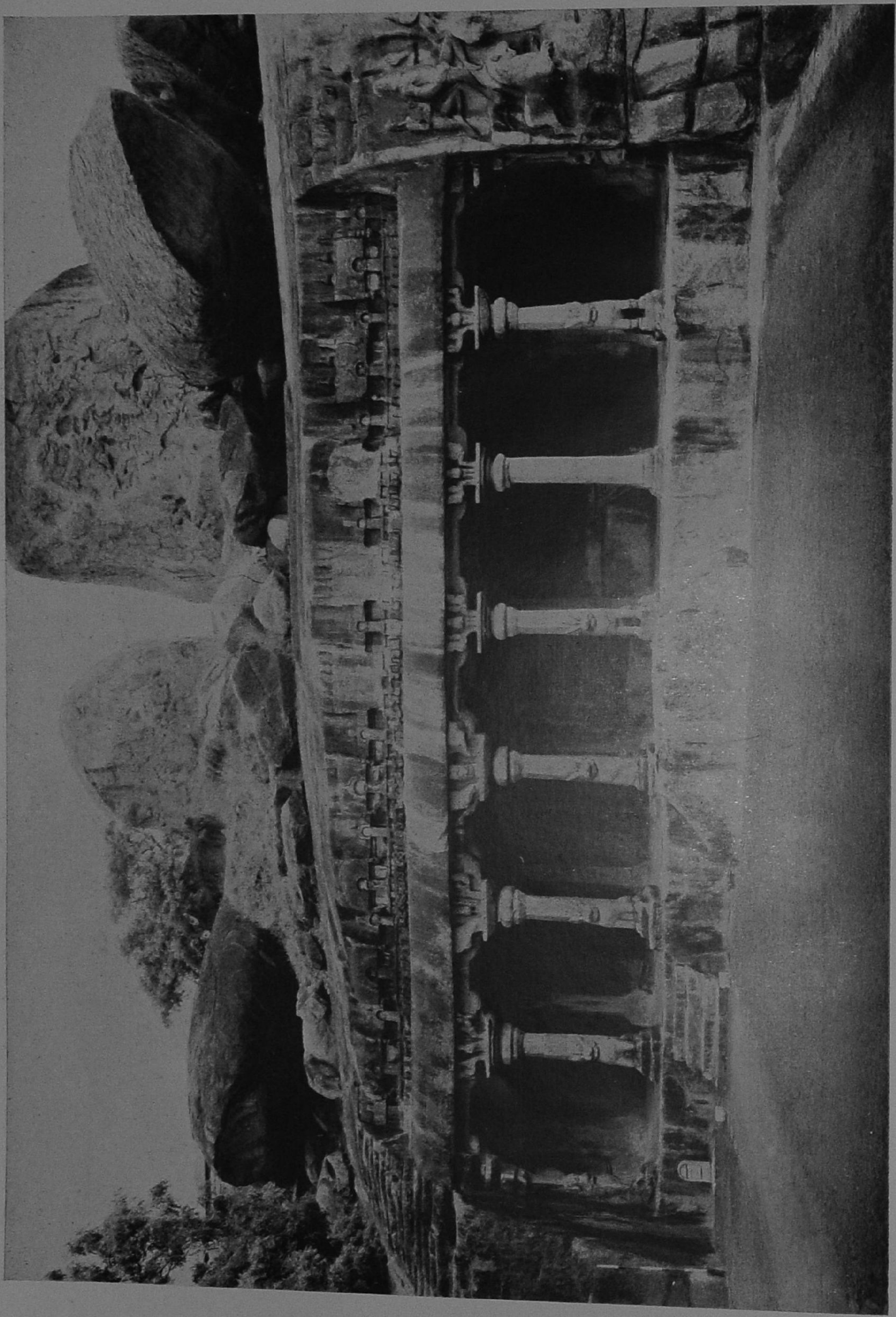


PLATE LII

Mahābalipuram: Pañchapāṇḍava-maṇḍapam cave-temple, with unfinished adhishṭhāna, vyāla-based façade-pillars carrying full capitals and rampant lion-brackets in the corbel-angles over the abacus, kapōta without kūḍus and string of miniature shrines on top. Māmalla style

See page 164

PLATE LIII

Mahābalipuram: Paramēśvara-Mahāvarāha-Vishṇu-gṛiha (Ādivarāha) cave-temple. Māmalla style,

A

Vishṇu niche in central panel on northern half of projecting shrine-front, north of shrine-entrance. To the right of Vishṇu is Ādiśēsha and to his left is partially seen the northern dvāra-pāla guarding the shrine-entrance

B

Hari-Hara niche in central panel on southern half of projecting shrine-front, south of shrine-entrance. To the left of Hari-Hara is the sculpture of an attendant, while to his right is partially visible the southern dvāra-pāla guarding the shrine-entrance

See page 170

A

B

A

B

PLATE LIV

Mahābalipuram: Paramēśvara-Mahāvarāha-Vishṇu-gṛiha (Ādivarāha) cave-temple

A

Śrī or Gaja-Lakshmī on lotus, bathed by elephants with female attendants carrying water, on north extreme of hind wall of ardha-maṇḍapa (compare plate XLII)

B

Eight-armed Durgā, in tri-bhaṅga, on south extreme of hind wall of ardha-maṇḍapa, standing on buffalo-head with lion, deer and gaṇas on top, two female attendants one on either side (similar to dvāra-pālikās of Kōṭikāl-maṇḍapam, plate XXXI B and C), two devotees, one cutting his hand and the other in prayer

See pages 170 and 171

PLATE LV

Mahābalipuram: Paramēśvara-Mahāvarāha-Vishṇu-gṛiha (Ādivarāha) cave-temple

A

Portrait sculpture on northern end-wall of ardha-maṇḍapa, labelled 'Simhaviṇṇa-p-pōtrādirājan' (Narasiṁhavarman Māmalla) seated on throne and his two queens standing on either side

B

Portrait sculpture on southern end-wall of ardha-maṇḍapa, labelled 'Mahēndra-pōtrādi-rājan' (Mahēndravarman II), leading his two queens

See page 172

A

B

A

B

PLATE LVI

Mahābalipuram: Paramēśvara-Mahāvarāha-Vishṇu-gṛiha (Ādivarāha) cave-temple

A

Śiva as Gaṅgādhara on northern end-wall of mukha-maṇḍapa

B

Brahmā on southern end-wall of mukha-maṇḍapa

See page 172

PLATE LVII

Mahābalipuram: Rāmānuja-maṇḍapam cave-temple. Māmalla style

A

General view, with crude pillars of a modern maṇḍapa obstructing full view

B

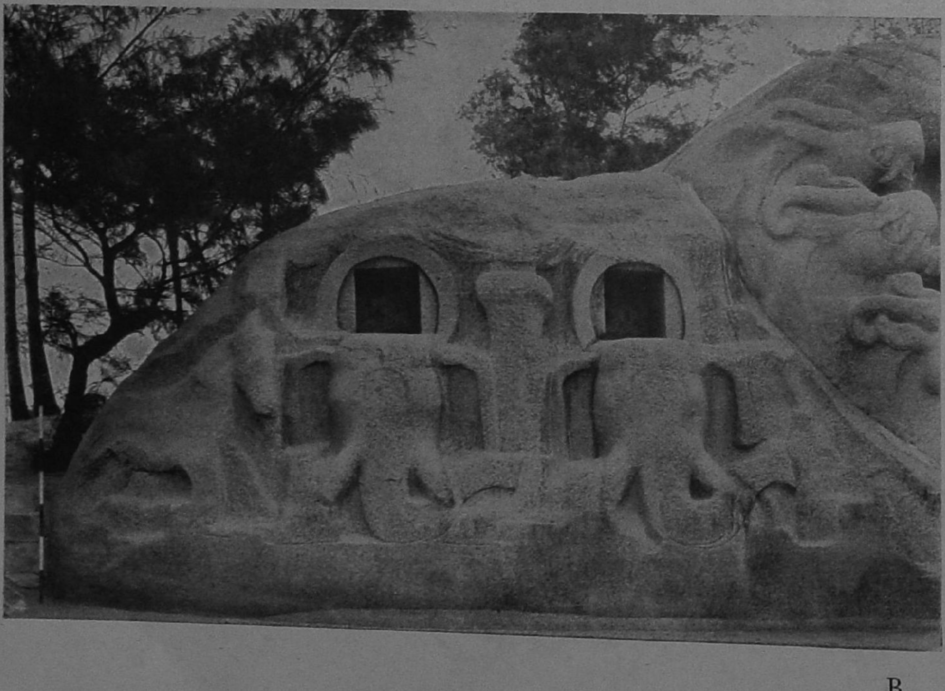
Façade, with vyāla-pillars and pilasters, chiselled-off dvāra-pālas, two miniature vimānas in relief at either extreme, ornate kapōta and row of miniature shrines on top

See page 175

A

B

A



B

PLATE LVIII

Śāḷuvaṇkuppam: Yāḷi-maṇḍapam or 'Tiger'-cave. Māmalla style

A

Rock with Yāḷi-maṇḍapam. Pavilion surrounded by a tōraṇa of vyāla-heads, with rearing lion-based pilasters in front of pavilion and flanking the steps and the adjoining recumbent elephants with niches on their backs

B

Details of two recumbent elephants, carrying niches which contain sculptures, a stambha in between and a horse at the southern extreme

See pages 180 and 182